THE

CRITICAL REVIEW.

SERIES THE THIRD.

Vol. VI. NOVEMBER, 1805. *No. III.*

ART. I.—*An analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste. By Richard Payne Knight.* 8vo. *pp.* 471. Payne *and* White. 1805.

IF it be true, that, in treating a subject which has already occupied the attention of eminent writers, an author stands under the disadvantage of unavoidable comparison with what has been deemed the most excellent in its kind, it must be remembered, that, to enable him to hold his ground in the comparison, he enjoys above those who have preceded him, not only their accumulated experience, but an acquaintance with the sentiments of mankind on the particular topics which come under his investigation. In proportion as the celebrity of authors increases, their opinions attract more notice, and their merits are canvassed with more than ordinary care and sagacity; for, in the same proportion the glory of refutation is enhanced, and the circumstance of agreement becomes more flattering to self-love, and more productive of self-satisfaction.

As fashionable, likewise, as it may be to insist upon the attachment of plain and practical men to established opinions, it might be maintained with equal truth, that the prejudices of the inquiring part of mankind are generally very much on the side of an author, who venturing to call their attention to a hacknied subject, gives reason to expect that his mode at least of treating the same, will differ from that of his predecessors. Former opinions are for the moment set aside, and the mind presents itself free and unincumbered for the reception of new impressions and new pleasures. Resolutions of distrust, which may have been formed at the season of disappointment, are for the most part found of inconsiderable force when the trial is at hand, and a fresh opportunity for gratification offered.

Such are the circumstances under which the author of this Inquiry appears before the public. Upon the same

ground with himself have already trodden many great and illustrious men, and from the operation of his ingenuity upon the collective experience of mankind, we had just grounds for expecting much instruction. We were not without hopes of discovering a new light, which, for the future, might stand as a conspicuous beacon to direct us through many intricate and obscure parts of the subject.

That taste has its foundation in the natural constitution of our frame as an original principle, and that it is capable of receiving considerable improvement from culture and experience, has been universally admitted by philosophers, and it has been as universally allowed, that the pleasures which the vulgar derive from what are called the objects of taste, are merely gratifications of the senses. To shew how far the pleasures of mere organic sensation extend, and to separate these pleasures from such as are derived from the operation of the mind, is the avowed object of the work before us. Much care and labour have undoubtedly been bestowed upon it, and when we say that in the general outline nothing is proved and nothing is new, we mean not to detract from the merit of the author as to application of thought or invention, in a subject where, upon reflection, we might, perhaps, have discovered that nothing could be said or proved which was not already known. To confine expectancy within the limits prescribed by human power and probability, is, however, a task too difficult of execution for a being whose whole happiness is derived from the idea of progression, and whose most positive enjoyment consists in hope.

In the detail of his subject our author may lay greater claim to originality than in his general speculations. Notwithstanding which, it appears to us, that the object of his book, however disguised, was to clear away the rubbish made by some of his illustrious predecessors, rather than establish any thing in its stead. These collateral subjects of his inquiry are so multifarious, that in looking over the table of contents, we were more disposed to consider the work as an encyclopedia in abridgment, than as a connected treatise on a single branch of knowledge. To analyse the value of each constituent point upon which the author has exercised his ingenuity, would be evidently foreign from the purposes of our review, we shall therefore confine ourselves to some of the chief and most important topics which have met our attention. The rest will, no doubt, furnish abundant matter for examination to those who are more particularly interested in them, and to whom leisure and opportunity are not wanting.

Of the distinction between the organic and acquired pleasures, our author has taken a somewhat more enlarged view than those who have preceded him, and upon its accuracy seems inclined to lay a greater stress than some may deem warranted by the number and quality of the data from which his conclusions are drawn. Indeed, he acknowledges himself to be aware that 'the sensual pleasures are scarcely ever felt separate and unmixed, except in such extraordinary cases as that mentioned by Cheselden.' Supposing, however, as we are inclined to believe, upon his own and the authority of those who have written before him, that our instinctive sense of pleasure extends only to simple organic impressions, and that these are nearly such as he has described, we are satisfied with concluding, that, if our senses be perfect, all may be acquired by exercise which generally passes under the name of taste. By having ascertained the boundaries of organic pleasure with some probability, Mr. Knight has seconded the views of those who, have endeavoured to relieve art from the obstacles which stood in the way of its advancement, by denying inspiration and limiting genius; for surely, to the mere distinction between organic impressions, mankind never did, nor ever will attach the value and applause of taste. This inference our author evidently involves in his whole argument, though, misled by the use of a common expression, he occasionally denies it in his language.

We are informed that the pains and pleasures of hearing and sight, like those of the other senses, arise from certain modes and degrees of irritation; that sensual pleasure depends on a moderate and varied irritation of the organic nerves, which will be affected more or less according to their different degrees of sensibility; and that the beauties of light, shade and colour are all that affect the eye, or make any impression upon organic sense and perception. To talk of a taste for mere light, shade, and colour, is, surely, an absurdity not warranted by the commonest acceptation of the word, and these, as it appears, are the only objects of sensation. Our author is, nevertheless, continually perplexing himself and his readers by calling taste a matter of *feeling*, by which he certainly does not mean an operation of intellect, or improved perception, but simple instinctive sensation. To what conclusion, we repeat, does his whole argument lead, if not to this, that no objects which come within the range of taste properly so called, are detected as pleasures by the organs of sense? To make a distinction between the nature of *feelings*, is a nicety to which our powers

are not adequate, and we maintain that the analogy is false, if any such is intended in contradistinction to the impression made by the result of a judgment.

In his definition Mr. Knight is guilty of a curious error, and nearly allied to the one just mentioned. When he says that taste is 'a general discriminative faculty *arising* from *just* feeling and *correct judgment*, *implanted* in the mind of man by his Creator, and improved by exercise, study, and meditation,' taste is described as a matter of instinctive sensibility, *arising* nevertheless from a judgment and perfection of judgment which can have been the only object and consequence of exercise, study, and meditation.

In the series of pleasures, our author next enumerates those arising from imitation, then such as spring from character, expression, technical skill, imagination and judgment. Taste, then, properly speaking, commences as a decision of judgment confirming or denying resemblance in the imitation of familiar objects. The same principle may, perhaps, be extended to every other instance. The common error of attributing taste to feeling rather than a process of the understanding, is chiefly owing to the rapidity with which the decision is made among the more immediate objects of taste. The mind, however, having more connection with the sight, and the sight more exercise than any other sense, it is not difficult to conceive that the effect of habit would very early in life render this operation too rapid to become perceptible. The objects of comparison are, moreover, such as have been fairly and distinctly represented to the mind through the sight, and the forms remain, unlike many of the other subjects of reason which are so intricate and so far removed from sense, as frequently to leave no image whereby they may be compared one with the other, till much collateral aid has been furnished by attention and memory. This *feeling* then, seems only to be the result of a judgment, from habit become rapid and imperceptible, and resembling entirely the conviction arising from all other processes of judgment. Mr. Burke is of this opinion, and extends it so much farther as to deny any suddenness of operation.

Those objects in nature or art of which the mind in this process approves, are termed beautiful. Taste may consequently be called the discovery of the beautiful. But what is beauty? We answer, as a fair conclusion from every thing we have been able to collect from Mr. Knight, or others, that it is truth and fitness in the most comprehensive application of the terms. The beautiful therefore, will vary in every object in nature. In simple objects, according to the

propriety of parts considered in relation to the whole, or the agreement of the individual or species with the truth or propriety of the genus or class; and in complex objects according to their agreement with general nature. The central form and central character (if we may so express ourselves) can be discovered only by a very comprehensive acquaintance with nature. From this extensive survey Blumenbach, in opposition to Hunter, established the Georgian line of feature as most beautiful, or most accordant with the general tendency and effort of nature; and upon the same principle Hogarth laid down his line of beauty from a discovery that nature universally avoids straight lines; and this law will still remain, generally speaking, though Mr. Knight wishes to disparage it by contending that in its proper place every line may be a line of beauty; which no one will deny.

To prove that beauty is mere fitness, Mr. Knight has considered at some length several of its constituents. 'Symmetry, or the fitness and proportion of parts to each other and to the whole, is a necessary ingredient to beauty in all composite forms.'—— 'We always attach some ideas of regularity, neatness, or congruity, to the word *Beauty*.'——'That ease, grace, elegance, and dignity of attitude and gesture, which we so much admire in the Greek statues, do not consist in the lines of beauty, or depend upon the impressions which any specific forms make on the organs of sight; on the contrary, they arise wholly from mental sympathies, and the association of ideas: wherefore the forms which appear easy, graceful, elegant, or dignified in a horse, are totally different from those which appear so in a man.' P. 204. 'The case is, that there are certain postures into which the body naturally throws itself, and certain gestures which it naturally displays, when under the influence of certain passions and dispositions of mind; so that from our own internal feelings and sentiments, we learn to associate the ideas or notions of certain tempers and character of mind, with those of certain attitudes and modes of carriage of the body; which are, therefore, said to express those tempers and characters, as the features of the face do more immediately and unequivocally.' P. 205. 'As to lines, I know of none that may not be graceful, elegant, and beautiful in proper circumstances and situations, and none that are so, when employed improperly.' P. 210. 'All degrees of magnitude contribute to beauty in proportion as they shew objects to be perfect in their kind. That degree of magnitude in each individual which approaches nearest

to that of the mean proportion of the species or variety to which it belongs, is the best adapted to beauty.' P. 227. It appears to us rather unaccountable that Mr. Knight should have suffered the opinions of the author of the Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful, to have remained unmolested on this subject, when in other less egregious deviations from accuracy, he has attacked them without mercy; or rather that without particular allusion, he should have protested against the details of his reasonings, without observing that the whole error in his reasoning arose from a misconception of his terms. To have shewn that his usual comprehensiveness deserted him in his application of the term *Fitness*, and that no one of his instances militates against the opinion, that fitness alone constitutes beauty, would have been, perhaps, a task of no considerable difficulty. It appears to us, indeed, that nothing is more palpable, than the error into which he has fallen, in the sections which relate to this subject. Most of the instances adduced, are from objects in nature which are by no means familiar to us, or such as we have never been accustomed to compare together, so as to be able to decide upon their relative fitness. We do not, however, hesitate in asserting, that a naturalist fully acquainted with their several relative merits, would in fact pronounce most of these things to be beautiful or otherwise, though the ignorant might uniformly decide against them. To take the most striking instance: Will any one deny that a keen and accurate naturalist might, with precisely the same feelings as those we discover in regard to objects confessedly beautiful, affirm that he was in possession of, or had lately seen a most beautiful monkey? Even if this could not be, a reason (of which fitness is still the principle) is to be derived from the almost necessary comparison we are obliged to draw between this tribe and our own species. In this comparison, the standard of fitness will, surely, not lead us to give the preference to that animal, which departs further than any of the human race from the central character and form with which we are conversant, and by which we judge them. Fitness of the human figure is also rather more extensive than Mr. Burke has been pleased to imagine, as it consists not only in the due quality and quantity of limbs, but in quality and degree of expression, and a variety of other circumstances. That proportion is not always the cause of beauty, no one ever attempted to deny, and for this plain reason, that proportion is not always a part of fitness or truth. In vegetables, for instance, *fitness* may happen to consist in *want* of proportion. Nei-

ther will any one maintain that *one* and the same proportion constitutes the beauty of different animals; but that to each his own proportion does so, nobody of ordinary capacity will be inclined to dispute.

Taste, then, or the power of discovering fitness, will, if all our reasoning be just, necessarily vary in almost every individual, and beauty, though a permanent principle, can never be an universal beauty. If, indeed, the original conformation of mind and body were the same in each individual, if all men had received similar impressions and modes of thinking from habits and education, then would all agree in affixing to the same objects the same idea, or there would be a common and universal beauty. As things, however, are constituted, each mind perceives a different beauty according to its acquired ideas of fitness, or the relation it is enabled to discover in proportion to the extent of its acquaintance with nature: and as it is reasonable to distrust the comprehension of individuals, however large their faculties may be, so it has been and still continues customary to consider the general sense of mankind as the only criterion of excellence.

The beauty in the works of art which will stand the test of ages, and be approved as such by the largest number of mankind, will be that propriety or agreement with general nature, which, avoiding details, presents to notice only such features as may be recognized at once, and at once excite sympathy. Upon this principle Sir Joshua Reynolds laid down the inestimable rule which Mr. Knight has borrowed, when he says, (p. 287.) 'In all serious compositions, in every representation of character, where strong passions and affections are to be expressed, both the poet, the painter, and the sculptor should adhere to permanent principles, and avoid all fluctuating modes and fashions, for, not only the passions and affections of the human mind, but the natural modes of expressing them, are the same in all ages and all countries; and the less these natural modes are connected with those of local and temporary habit, the more strong and general will be the sympathies excited by them.' He might have extended this rule with equal propriety to the comic and ridiculous, for even here it will be found, upon a very slight examination, that only such peculiarities, if it may be so said, which have their principles in general nature, will universally please and continue to communicate pleasure to the great mass of mankind.

In his application of the term *taste*, to the apparent approbation manifested by a conformity with the current fashions of the day, it appears to us that Mr. Knight has degraded

it from its true dignity. He has not made a distinction which certainly exists between adoption and considerate approbation. Fashions are followed from the dislike to singularity, from mere imitation, from love of rareness or distinction without any thought of beauty. So far, indeed, is the mind from approving every thing it adopts, that it is a fact ascertained by daily experience, that scarcely a fashion does please at first, as it must naturally do, if his reasoning were just. Habit alone reconciles to many things, which, it is true, may afterwards be approved and considered beautiful. We cannot, therefore, agree with the opinion that 'real inclination (if it means taste,) is to be judged of more from practice than professions,' nor think it is necessary that 'a fashion must have been previously felt as ornamental, if it ever happen to be really and considerately thought so;' for, not to mention that it would be in direct opposition to the sentiments we have already delivered on the nature of taste, the fact in this instance seems to warrant only a contrary conclusion. Of those who adopt fashions, few think at all; and of those who do think, some are influenced by the motives above specified, and others may perhaps from ignorance approve what is not strictly conformable to nature. What Sir Joshua Reynolds has denominated truth by sufferance, must, it is clear, have frequent place in the decisions of mankind, and may happen to be really and considerately approved.

Upon 'the strange and unphilosophical theories' of the author of an Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful, Mr. Knight has vented much of his indignation, and has taken pains to prove that magnitude, obscurity, and terror are not necessary ingredients in sublime objects or sublime feelings. These he has 'simplified into power and the discovery of power, and states as a reason for the repetition of arguments frequently repeated, that these seducing theories are daily acquiring more and more influence over the practice of mankind. 'Every energetic exertion of great and commanding power, whether of body or mind, whether physical or moral, or whether it be employed to preserve or destroy, will necessarily excite corresponding sympathies, and, of course, appear sublime.' P. 359. 'All sublime feelings are, according to the principles of Longinus, which I have here endeavoured to illustrate and confirm, feelings of exultation and expansion of the mind, tending to rapture and enthusiasm; and whether they be excited by sympathy with external objects, or arise from the internal operations of the mind, they are still of the same nature.

In grasping at infinity, the mind exercises the powers, before noticed, of multiplying without end; and, in so doing, it expands and exalts itself, by which means its feelings and sentiments become sublime,' P. 361. 'The moment the actual pressure of fear is felt, all sympathy with the cause that produces it, consequently all relish for the sublimity of it, is at an end.' P. 367. 'All obscurity is imperfection. The imagination must conceive distinct, but not determinate ideas.' P. 386. 'Critics have been led into the notion that imagery is rendered sublime by being indistinct and obscure, by mistaking energies for images, and looking for *pictures* where *powers* only were meant to be expressed.' P. 387. 'The sublime of vastness of dimensions and unlimited greatness of size, is of that description which every grovelling imagination may reach, without any effort than that of multiplication.'—'The passions can sympathize with no images that the imagination does not comprehend distinctly.' P. 400. 'I do not mean to deny that vastness may be a means of exciting sublime sentiments; but then it is upon the principle of indefinite extension before explained.' P. 406. This latter appears rather a singular qualification of the opinion expressed before, and with this expression we think the author in no wise differs from Mr. Burke's meaning, who says, 'designs that are vast only by their dimensions, are always the sign of a common and low imagination.' P. 136. Whether or no he be correct on the subject of obscurity, may still be a matter of doubt, at least as far as relates to visible objects, and the difference between the obscure in writing, and in objects presented to the sight, is, that the former gives no ideas at all, while the latter does present enough for the imagination to distinguish, without determining the precise limits within which its operation shall be confined. That *power* itself was the chief ingredient in the sublime, Mr. Burke was no less aware than the author of the present work, who, had he taken the pains to read the Inquiry carefully through, would have met the following passage. 'I know of nothing sublime which is not some modification of power.' P. 116. Shall we venture to simplify the matter a little farther, and say that the sublime arises in all cases from a suspension of the comparative power, or, in other words, that the idea of the sublime is suggested whenever the effort at comparison which the mind is continually making, fails, in consequence of the want of a standard beyond, with which it may compare its actual conceptions. It seems to be for this reason that terror is incompatible with the feelings excited by the sublime, because

while under the influence of fear, the mind can make no effort at such comparison.

The unqualified censure which Mr. Knight has been pleased to pass upon rules and system, is founded, it appears to us, rather upon their abuse, than upon their usual and proper application. In saying that 'rules and system can never reach every possible case, and that if they could, the act of applying them would distract the attention from the sentiment excited,' it is difficult to conceive what rules and system he had in view, which do affect to extend to every possible case. Was there ever an academy which professed to supply a common measure between art and the several conceptions which might arise in the artist's mind, and which it would be necessary to apply upon every occasion? Or does Mr. Knight mean to say that it is a privilege which ought to be granted to genius, to violate in grammar the rules of syntax; in poetry those of metre; in music those of harmony; in logic those of syllogism; in painting those of perspective; in dramatic poetry those of probable imitation? That he is right only to a certain extent, in assigning to system and rules the want of good artists throughout Europe since the institution of public academies, is clear from many considerations, and particularly from the circumstance that schools existed no less in the most flourishing periods of the arts, than they have done since. Who will deny that the schools of Raphael and the Caracci, produced great men, or that Raphael and the Caracci had previously been subjected to masters, who confined them as much within rule and system, as could have been since done in the larger academies? We are inclined to attribute the low state of the arts to the opposite cause to that assigned by Mr Knight, namely, to the licentiousness and want of attention to rules and system in our modern artists; and if he will take the trouble of reading any work on the lives of the painters, and with the impressions derived from such perusal, inquire into the habits of his contemporary artists, we think he will come over to our opinion. To illustrate this by a single instance: with one or two exceptions, what modern painter has acquired such a knowledge of the human figure as will allow him to represent it in all its possible, or even some of its most usual foreshortenings, and is not, from this want of knowledge, continually obliged either to distort his figures, or place them in unnatural attitudes to conceal his ignorance of outline? And which of them, possessing this knowledge, will not display it in opposi-

tion to every acknowledged rule of composition and propriety, rather than forego the applause of technical skill and sciences.

That rules may be extended too far, we allow, but that they have been so, we deny. Such rules as shall prevent and supersede the necessity of observation, will certainly destroy the only means of excellence; and by setting aside that which constitutes the agreeable in art, the discovery of truth, and reducing the whole to a process upon trust, will remove the incentives to exertion, (which are the same in this, as in every other department of human industry,) and convert the artist into the mere mechanic. That the business of copying is, perhaps, carried too far, we easily admit, and those who have been conversant with foreign galleries, will not be disposed to think otherwise. Sir Joshua Reynolds was well aware of this truth, and in relation to this and every other subject connected with the art, has delivered *rules*, which, if even *systematically* followed, would, we believe, be found to encroach upon none of the privileges of genius, and take nothing from the highest pretensions of taste. It is in vain to attribute the defect of excellence to want of encouragement and opportunity. We are persuaded that even in this day of perverted taste, if some great artist were to arise, who, by that usual criterion of excellence, the approbation of the community, might be deemed worthy the appellation of the second Raphael, the encouragement he would receive would as far exceed that given to his contemporary artists, as that which has been bestowed on the second Roscius surpasses all the praise and all the profits which his contemporary actors have received. From this tribunal no appeal is successful, and let it be remembered that to question its authority, can be productive only of mortification.

From P. 211, to P. 224, Mr. Knight gives vent to his feelings of indignation at the whole system of modern country-houses and landscape gardening.

'When according to the modern fashion, all around is levelled and thrown open: and the poor square edifice exposed alone, or with the accompaniment of its regular wings and portico, amidst spacious lawns interspersed with irregular clumps or masses of wood, and sheets of water, I do not know a more melancholy object: it neither associates nor harmonizes with any thing.' P. 212.

Just as these observations may be considered by many, they will not influence the decision of thousands who approve upon other principles of beauty the system

here abused, and who derive their pleasure from the sense of 'neatness, freshness, lightness, symmetry, regularity, uniformity,' which Mr. Knight has himself pointed out as 'beauties of the highest class.' Association he has elsewhere said, (p. 154), 'renders those qualities which are peculiarly adapted to promote the comforts and enjoyments of social life, pleasing to the eye of civilized men, though there be nothing in the forms or colour of the objects themselves in any degree pleasing to the sense, but perhaps the contrary.' In the habitation of man, then, these circumstances, as highly fitting, may, whatever, be the means employed, continue to be considered as beautiful, and to these circumstances much care and attention has been paid in the modern system of building and gardening.

Mr. Knight observes, that,

'Since the introduction of a style of ornamental gardening, called, at first oriental, and afterwards landscape gardening, (probably from its efficacy in destroying all picturesque composition) Grecian temples have been employed as decorations by almost all persons who could afford to indulge their taste in objects so costly: but, though executed, in many instances, on a scale and in a manner suitable to the design, disappointment has, I believe, been invariably the result. Nevertheless they are unquestionably beautiful, being exactly copied from those models which have stood the criticism of many successive ages, and been constantly beheld with delight and admiration. In the rich lawns and shrubberies of England, however, they lose all that power to please which they so eminently possess on the barren hills of Agrigentum and Segesta, or the naked plains of Pœstum and Athens. But barren and naked as these hills and plains are, they are still, if I may say so, their native hills and plains, the scenery in which they sprang, and in which the mind therefore contemplates them, connected and associated with numberless interesting circumstances both local and historical, both physical and moral, upon which it delights to dwell. In our parks and gardens, on the contrary, they stand wholly unconnected with all that surrounds them, mere unmeaning excrescences; or what is worse, manifestly meant for ornament, and therefore having no accessory character but that of ostentation, vanity, &c.' p. 167.

Our author reasons here, as on many other subjects, with regard to fitness, from his own particular associations. He forgets that the objects above described are not considered as misplaced by a very large portion of mankind; that of the spectators a very inconsiderable number will feel disappointed in consequence of any sympathy with the originals; while the great mass will receive pleasure from a variety of sources unconnected with these associations. He forgets the natural sympathy with the rich, and the impressions made by

power, let it be manifested in whatsoever way it will. He does not recollect those 'beauties of the highest class,' which we have lately quoted in his own words, and which will continue to be considered as such, in spite of the remonstrances of critics. By these critics themselves, as it appears, principle has been armed against principle. They have endeavoured to shew by rule why that should not be, which by another rule they have not only proved to be, but to be proper. They have themselves supplied a standard by which others may measure the purity of their tastes, and decide against rules by the establishment of which these critics have, unwillingly perhaps, used every endeavour to disparage their own previous decisions. Of the truth of this many instances might be given from the work before us, in addition to those already noticed. If, as our author shews, gentle variety be a source of beauty and pleasure, surely the line of beauty against which he employs so much of his rhetoric, must, as presenting, of all other lines, the most gentle variety, be likewise beautiful and pleasing. In denying smoothness to be pleasant to the touch, and allowing that the pleasures of this sense arise from gentle irritations, he seems to deny a fact which every one else would maintain, and adopts a principle upon which his argument falls of itself, for surely there can be no irritation more gentle than that which arises from a smooth substance: this pleasure may, indeed, be trifling, but is, perhaps, a general one, independently of sympathy.

We regret the necessity we are here under of taking leave of this very interesting work. If in our imperfect notice of it, we have ventured upon some few occasions to differ from its author, we cannot but acknowledge that in many more instances we have felt obliged to give an unqualified assent to his opinions; and, in recommending the perusal of his elaborate inquiry to our readers, we do it with the full conviction that they will receive much entertainment and much information. The illustrations are for the most part, original and apposite, and many of the topics such as have been scantily discussed by former writers.

Together with the work, we cannot help recommending its author as affording an example worthy the imitation of many of our countrymen. The learned ease of this gentleman may serve as a valuable model to thousands, who amid the many heavy demands of science and philosophy, and with every circumstance of education, fortune, and leisure on their sides, remain, nevertheless, as idle and unconcerned spectators, heedless of the important questions which interest and agitate mankind, and careless in the cultivation of those dispositions and talents, which might essentially contribute to the advancement of private comfort or public utility.

ART. II.—*History of Great Britain, from the Revolution, 1688, to the Conclusion of the Treaty of Amiens. Vols. XI. and XII. By William Belsham.* 8vo. Phillips. 1805.

THE office of the historian is dignified and sacred. He undertakes to describe events, in which whole nations are the agents, and on the issue of which the fate of kingdoms depends. In executing this arduous task, it is necessary that his knowledge, his virtue, and his genius should raise him to an eminence, where he may stand aloof from the common passions and engagements of the world, and whence he may take a wide and uninterrupted view of the grand scenes which he ventures to describe. At the same time the instruction of his species must be his only aim, and eternal truth his only guide.

While history opens to our view the rise and downfall of nations, and traces the causes which have raised some kingdoms to the pinnacle of wealth and power, and precipitated others into the gulf of ignorance and barbarism, it exhibits man in every character and in every state; it makes men wise by the delineation of the actions of other men: it makes us acquainted with our own nature by presenting the most extensive display of our passions, of our intellects, of our vices, of our virtues, of our weaknesses, and of our powers. The historian, therefore, must be thoroughly informed of every feeling of the heart, every working of the mind. It is this knowledge which will enable him to trace the secret springs of actions productive of the most important and unexpected effects, to penetrate with profound inquiry into depths, which to common minds would appear unfathomable, and to exhibit in lucid order, what to common eyes would appear an undistinguishable mass of confusion. It is this knowledge which reminds the historian, although he may have the most exalted notions of what man ought to be, never to forget what man is, and never to suffer his conceptions of ideal perfection to carry him so far, as to lose sight of the real state of things. It is this knowledge, which, while his delineations are wrought with the boldness of genius, and with colours 'dipt in heaven,' still preserves to them the discrimination of accuracy and the fidelity of truth: as the painter's skill in the anatomy of the human frame still preserves to his heroes the likeness of men.

History is the only muse who must resign all connection with fancy: still her affinity to genius is stamped in every

feature, and she will treat on no subject without adorning it. The magic charms of her eloquence will throw a lustre on the most trifling objects, the most important events will be seen in full magnitude by her developement, and even truth itself appear more bright by her illustrations. If biography, who relates the anecdotes of private life, can give dignity to the most minute occurrence by the beauties of narration, if she can, in her humble walk, interest the attention by appeals to the heart, and improve the mind by lessons of wisdom; if this painter of domestic scenes can thus delineate in glowing colours, what may we not justly expect from history in her more exalted province, where the most magnificent objects are the subjects of her pencil, where heroes, statesmen, and the chiefs of men are the portraits, and the world itself the scene?

It is the nature of true genius to rise with the dangers of situation, to find in difficulties only new causes for energy, and a wider scope for the exertion of its powers. Such ought to be the genius of that historian who attempts to write the annals of the present age, of the age in which he lives, and more particularly if his own country is the subject of his history. Though he may possess a mind of that sublime tenor which we have described, accompanied with that peculiar sagacity which is required to scrutinize the private agencies of political intrigue; though he may fully possess these rare qualities, there is danger lest the feelings of patriotism should warp his judgment, lest the ardour of patriotism should throw down reason from her seat, and leave his imagination uncontrolled in describing the exploits of his own countrymen, the heroes of his native soil. As his task is nobly arduous, we should hail his success with the greater applause. Every reader would place himself under the guidance of the sage Mentor, and listen to his instruction with wonder and delight. We critics should only have occasion to point to the tablet of instruction, and to explain the propriety of its various allusions; and we should be happy in this humble office.

Mr. Belsham does not possess a mind of the above stamp. His abilities have not adorned his page with those beauties, nor have his patriotic feelings tarnished them with those pardonable blemishes, which we have alluded to; but we have entered into these preliminary observations to shew our conceptions of the great duties and the important office of the historian.

The history before us is little more than a chronicle of events, in which, if our author had confined himself to a sim-

ple and naked recital of facts, he would have done well, and he might have been dismissed with the frigid praise of fidelity; but as he has, in selecting these events, brought forward only those circumstances which suit a particular aim, and coincide with a particular bias of opinion, and as he has interspersed occasional remarks, which breathe a spirit of rancour, where we should rather expect the more proper sentiments of respect and admiration, we can only give a just opinion of his work by a minute investigation of its component parts.

Mr. B. prefaces his eleventh volume with a profession of having 'altered and modified many expressions of anger and asperity' in the preceding parts of his history: he avows himself conscious of the violence of his temper, and solicitous not to transgress into that licentiousness which he has so often mistaken for freedom: by these becoming apologies he invites us to peruse his two last volumes, and induces us to sit down in his company by informing us that his passion has cooled.

We have read of a king of France, who was aware of the impetuous passions which raged in his breast, and who, on the first rising impulse of anger, was conscientiously accustomed to hop on one leg, and repeat the letters of the alphabet, till his mind was thoroughly calm. If Mr. B. had pursued this method, if he had taken this moral and physical hop in a parenthesis between each paragraph, we are convinced that the complexion of his history would have been of a different cast. Perhaps the *regal* splendour of this example may check in our author's mind every hope of imitation; however excellent the maxim may be, republican virtue will not stoop to comply with it. We would therefore recommend to his serious attention the well-known precept of Horace, which has always appeared to us (though none of his numerous commentators have seen it in that light) to have been particularly intended to direct the conduct of lampoon-writers, the frothy spirit of whose petty spite, if corked up for nine years, would subside, and the nauseous draught would then appear vapid and sour, and disgusting to the palate of the public. The precept of Horace is of very wide extent, for there are lampoon-writers in every department of knowledge, in every walk of literature; in history as well as in poetry. The justness of this remark, with the propriety of the advice that results from it, will appear, as we trace the progress of the present work, which we shall do with a minuteness that, we fear, may be tedious.

The eleventh volume of the History of Great Britain opens with the speech from the throne at the commencement of the session of parliament on the 20th of November, 1798, in which his majesty speaks with just elation at the success of the British arms under Admiral Nelson in the battle of the Nile. Then follows an account of the debate on the address which of course ensued in both houses. This account is a specimen of the style and tenor of the whole work. We have seventeen lines of a speech by the Marquis of Lansdown, sixteen lines from that of Lord Holland, about nine from Lord Mulgrave's reply, and fifteen from the speech of Lord Grenville. In the debates of the house of commons, we have ten lines of what was uttered by Sir John Sinclair, and twelve from an harangue by Sir Francis Burdett. Let not our readers contemptuously exclaim, 'Admirable Critics! With what consummate skill do they use their rule and their compasses!" We have been thus minute for the purpose of making the following remarks. In ancient historians we find orations put into the mouths of persons, which really were never uttered by them, but the justifiable and pleasing fiction was adopted as an easy method of placing a variety of arguments and circumstances in a plain and obvious light. If this method was once thought so proper, that recourse even to fiction was allowed, the modern historian may very consistently take advantage of those parliamentary discussions, which regulate the politics of the present day: but in the very outset of his work this dilemma presents itself; he must either give the whole or the chief parts of the speeches on both sides, or he must use the matter of them for the groundwork of his own general remarks; he must decidedly make his choice, and regulate the tenor of his history accordingly; and he must pursue this tenor with uniformity. If he adopt the former mode, it is his duty to make a selection, not partially, but of the best orations on both sides of the question, and to record either the whole of those orations, or such parts of them as contain the whole weight of the argument; and it is his duty to do this on all important occasions. If he gives the speeches on only one side of the question, he is guilty of injustice to the orators on the opposite side; if he selects only a few lines from a long speech which are irrelevant to the subject, he is guilty of injustice to the individual orator, and to the cause which he supports. By this *Procrustean* mode of abbreviation, which cuts off *ad libitum* the heads and legs of orations, we very often lose all that gave sense to the sentiment, or strength to the reasoning. Thus in the debate with which the volume before us

commences, the collective wisdom of all our senators is compressed into the short space of three pages. Although the question which was debated, related to a continuance of the war, and to the new sources of our power from the victory at the Nile, and the consequent derangement of the enemy's gigantic plans of conquest, not one word is said of the relative situation of the armies on the continent, of the condition of the French at Genoa, of the proper or improper policy of offering to make peace while the French were in possession of Egypt, but a few garbled expressions are selected, which have absolutely little or nothing to do with the subject. If the united sense of the House of Lords, and of all our representatives, produced no better arguments than we find in Mr. Belsham's extracts, it was his office as an historian, to give the result of his own reflections on the propriety of the speech from the throne, which described the battle of the Nile (in our opinions very justly) as a 'blow given to the power of France, affording an opening, which, if improved by suitable exertions on the part of the other powers, might lead to the general deliverance of Europe.' Readers of a future age (if Mr. Belsham's works should have any) will not believe, that a momentous question, which was to decide whether we were to paralyze our efforts in the moment of our strength, or whether we were to shew our sense of those advantages, which our seamen had bought with their blood at Aboukir, was passed over in such a superficial manner. Readers of the present age will remember, that it was not conducted in such a slovenly mode. Consequently the account in question is deficient; but mere deficiency might have been forgiven; the privilege of *nodding* sometimes was granted to Homer, and might therefore fairly be allowed to Mr. Belsham. We might have pardoned him, if he had not recorded a single syllable of the debate; but this would not have suited his purpose; he would not have had an opportunity of introducing Sir Francis Burdett's speech, in which there was a passage too important to be omitted—a passage which had nothing to do with the subject, but which was so congenial with the spirit, so harmonious with the colouring of Mr. Belsham's History, that the omission of it would in his eyes have been an irremediable blemish, a defect for which no other beauties could atone. Sir Francis energetically insists, that, as a preliminary to a vote of thanks on the address, the PRISON IN COLD BATH FIELDS should be destroyed.

This generous proposal awakens the deepest sympathy: this is a golden apple, for which our historian cannot resist

the temptation to turn out of his course. But what can the house of correction for Middlesex have to do with the battle of the Nile? As Christmas is approaching, we might fall in with the fashion of the season, and leave the solution of this conundrum to the publication of our next number, but we will not tantalize our readers by keeping them in such suspense. Know then, that his majesty's speech expresses a wish for the deliverance of Europe: this reminds Sir Francis of a gaol delivery; and gives him a delicious opportunity of introducing the celebrated watch-word 'Bastille.' For the full display of this figure of rhetoric, the aid of the printer is called in, and the words 'deliverance,' 'peace,' and 'Bastille,' shine in capitals and italics so clear, that the most stupid may not mistake their meaning, nor the most careless pass them without notice. Such are the six first pages of Mr. Belsham's history.

The next page contains Mr. Tierney's motion for an address advising his majesty not to enter into any engagement which might impede a negotiation for peace. The heads of Mr. T.'s speech are given without the introduction of a single argument from the opposite side, although we are informed that the discussion was of considerable length. We have heard of a Welch judge who never would listen to more than one side of a question, because if he heard both, he was puzzled. If the said judge be now alive, we recommend this history to his worship.

We forbear to stop at the interesting discussion which takes place on the reading of the bill for the suspension of the Habeas corpus act. We have no tears for Colonel Despard.

The objections to the income tax, certainly the most galling of all taxes, are fully and ably stated.

The union with Ireland is introduced with proper remarks on the magnitude and importance of the measure, and the debates on the occasion are given with tolerable accuracy and discrimination: but praise to him, whose zeal, energy, and wisdom planned and matured the great and comprehensive scheme, is scattered with a very sparing hand. In a history of generals by the King of Prussia, there is no mention of the Duke of Marlborough: we cannot accuse our author of exactly similar neglect; we cannot say that in his account of the leading agents of the union, Mr. Pitt is entirely omitted, but he is not placed where every body would expect to find him, in the foreground of the piece.

The operations of the Austro-Russian army, under the command of the renowned Suwarroff, are abridged with

sufficient accuracy from the journals of the day; Mr. B. has enlivened one page, by the following quotation from Gray:

> The prostrate south to the destroyer yields
> Her boasted titles, and her golden fields:
> With grim delight the brood of winter view
> A brighter day, and skies of azure hue;
> Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
> And quaff the pendant vintage as it grows.

We admire a happy illustration, and more particularly if it is adorned with the charms of poetry: but from the above quotation we should wish to erase that very passage which most probably appeared to Mr. B. the leading feature of its beauty: we would erase that line, which most probably in Mr. B.'s association of ideas appeared the connecting link, which gave propriety and meaning to the adaption: we mean the first line. Suwarroff's approach might damp the ardour of that 'revolutionary spirit, which had so strongly seized the minds of a great majority of the most daring and enterprising part of the Italians,' and might therefore be matter of regret to certain individuals, but he did not come as a *destroyer*. We appeal to the peaceful, domestic, and innocent inhabitants of Tuscany, whether he, who came to drive away the wolves from their folds, came as a destroyer. Out of your own mouth we will judge you: we appeal to your own pages, Mr. B. and ask how the epithet of destroyer can be applied to him who came to deliver Italy, when by your own account, 'the directory had by their weak and oppressive policy, alienated the hearts of the Italians;' when 'Trouvé, under the title of Ambassador of France to the Cisalpine Republic, had domineered over that state with the most insolent and capricious tyranny; when not even the forms of a free government were suffered to subsist; but a new constitution was *imperiously imposed* by force upon them; and the Cisalpines found their pretended guardians converted into the most cruel oppressors;' when 'Liguria, Tuscany, Rome and even Lucca groaned under the directorial yoke.' The four last lines of the poetical quotation may very aptly be referred to the Russians; but we conceive that Mr. B. has made the printer guilty of a most scandalous libel, by affixing the asterisk of reference in the first line, to the name of Suwarroff, which ought to have been attached to Scherer or Massena, and which might, without much risk of mistake, have been applied at random to any French invader of Italy.

The horrid assassination of the French ministers, Bonnier and Roberjot, is detailed very circumstantially, and in such a manner as to impute it to the contrivance of the Austrian court. We have never seen the miraculous coat which Mr. Jean Debry wore on that occasion, but must observe that so many curious circumstances attended his escape, that if Mr. Bond or Mr. Graham had been on the spot, he would have been *committed for further examination.* Jean Debry was the first that was attacked, and of course he received the first edge of the assassin's vengeance: 'he fell covered with blood from repeated strokes of the sabre,' and when the hussars returned to see if he was actually dispatched, 'his arm fell as perfectly destitute of sensation.' Yet Mr. Jean Debry afterwards made his way to a neighbouring wood where he bound up his own wounds, and after continuing in the wood all night, ventured out, and crept slowly into the town the next morning. 'The coldness of the night contributed happily to stop the effusion of blood;' but what surprising good fortune supplied him with rags to bind up his numerous wounds, is still matter of conjecture and of wonder. By no means would we wish to speak of this horrid affair, without due abhorrence of the vile perpetrators, but we are desirous of exposing that intemperate judgment which leads Mr. B. into such a hasty decision against the Austrians, when no advantage could possibly accrue to them from such a wicked violation of the laws of nations, and of humanity; but it is not quite so clear, that the directory might not hope something from a diversion of that popular indignation which was now rising against them.

After the retreat of General Macdonald from the camp of Caserta, we are introduced to the situation of affairs at Naples, and to the condition of the *patriots*, who were now deserted by their friends, the French. This part of his work Mr. B. has wrought with every effort of his ability; for this part of his picture of Europe he has reserved the choicest colours of his pallet. In part of this description the honour of his countrymen (as he would make it appear) is tarnished, and here we find the most vivid touches of his pencil. But let us proceed in order. As the inferior ranks of the Neapolitan nation, as the great body of the people were averse from any change in their government, we do not exactly see, why a party, which chose to invite a savage foe to invade their country, and to assist them in planting the 'tree of liberty,' are to be dignified by the name of Patriots. Mr. B. and we have viewed the shield of the goddess of liberty on different sides, and we shall never coincide

in our opinion of its real colour. We cannot conceive on what grounds these patriots, (for so they are called in Mr. B.'s *dramatis personæ*) while they planted the tree of liberty by the aid of the French bayonet, could feel their 'hearts dilate at the prospect of future and progressive happiness.'

The love of our country (as Lord Minto well observed, in his celebrated speech on the Union) may be rational or fantastical, as that of any other object: but only when founded in utility can it challenge its descent from Heaven. If this love be well regulated, and all its modes and affections in due subordination, he who is influenced by it, will prefer the real and solid happiness of his country to any metaphysical or speculative distinction. Let us try the patriots of Naples by this excellent ordeal, (an ordeal, which few patriots of any country can safely undergo) and we shall hesitate before we commiserate very deeply the fate of men, who afterwards felt the edge of that revolutionary sword, from which they themselves first threw away the scabbard. They attempted to thrust, what they called, liberty, down the throats of the Neapolitans, who were not convinced of the salutary tendency of the medicine; and these patriotic physicians of course met with some kicks and scratches from their reluctant patients. But (say they) the people were mad, or they would have known what blessings we were preparing for them. If the people were mad, it was they who let loose the uncured maniacs, and accordingly they very deservedly felt the effects of their fury.

In our author's account, those who joined the king and crowded to the royal standard, are styled desperadoes and insurgents, rebels against the regular government; and yet in the same breath he confesses, that, even in their own nation, in the midst of their own people, the personal safety of the members of this government could not be depended upon any longer than while they were under the protection of the French army. Surely Mr. B. adopts a strange vocabulary! Surely, without any violation of common orthography, without any perversion of truth, that handful of self-created government-manufacturers, who voluntarily overthrew the established forms of the state, might justly be called the insurgents and rebels. But we will not quarrel about names, we will not dispute with our historian about misapplied epithets, for such an altercation would be endless. We will call the king and the bulk of the people, rebels, and the democratic faction, patriots: but we cannot join in astonishment with Mr. B. that, when the forts in which the patriots were besieged were taken, a few of the ringleaders

were executed. It is almost the natural consequence of things, that those who plant the tree of liberty in an improper soil, should ultimately be hung upon its branches. To avoid confusion, we comply with Mr. B.'s terms, and we describe the king and the populace as being in a state of insurrection: but we must confess that the misnomers in this chapter have puzzled us more, than we were ever puzzled by the two SOSIAS in the play. If the lions could paint (said the beast) we would draw a different picture; if the culprits were editors of the Newgate Calendar, they would probably describe the judge and jury as delinquents; and perhaps the memoirs of Colonel Despard may represent the whole English nation, king, lords, and commons, as conspirators. What can be more distressing to us critics than a chaotic confusion of words!

The patriots (Mr. B. relates) were besieged in two castles, and these 'two castles contained all the pride and ornament of the Neapolitan nation, all that Naples could boast of science, of patriotism, or of virtue.' They certainly did not contain all the wisdom, for of that a very small share could be possessed by those, who attempted to overthrow a government with which the people were contented. They certainly did not contain all the humanity, for what feeling for their fellow-creatures could *they* have, who, for the purpose of establishing a fantastic liberty, fraternized with French invaders and involved their country in anarchy and bloodshed? These castles surrendered, and the patriots (we abide by Mr. B.'s vocabulary) marched out with all the honours of war. The greater part of them were put on board prison-ships, some dismasted vessels in the Bay of Naples, where, as is not unusual in that climate, the weather was very warm. Mr. B.'s oratorical flourishes convert these ships into 'watery Bastilles,' (this is too favourite a figure of rhetoric ever to be let slip) where the unhappy prisoners were exposed to the burning rays of a meridian and solsticial sun. But it was not the confinement on board these watery Bastilles, not the want of food and clothing, not the burning rays of a solsticial sun that affected the feelings of these unhappy victims, so much as the sight of the British ambassadress going on board the admiral's ship in a handsome barge, or, to use our author's words, 'gallantly attended, like another Cleopatra, and rowed along the bay in nautical magnificence before these floatings tombs.' These glowing colours are not idly thrown on the canvas: all this effect is not studied for no purpose: the figures are thus grouped, that those, whom our author wishes to expose, may stand in a more conspicu-

ous light. All this labour of description is employed, that Lord Nelson may stand forth accused of having suffered the King of Naples to break the treaty of capitulation which was made with the patriots, when they surrendered the fort Castell-a-mare. With respect to the whole business we can only say, that those who excite a revolution are themselves the authors of all the horrors of a counter-revolution. We are not masters of all the facts; nor do we know that Lord Nelson could have prevented the execution of the ringleaders, if he wished so to do: but we know it to be a fact, that Captain Trowbridge, who was *under the command* of Lord Nelson, did about the very same time actually prevent the patriots from being exempted from the capitulation entered into between the King of Naples and the French officer Garnier. Instructions to demand the patriots were sent from the king, and the Princess Belmonte was the first person demanded. Garnier refused to deliver her up, and Sir Thomas Trowbridge applauded the refusal; and Sir Thomas certainly acted with Lord Nelson's approbation.

Mr. B. allows that the 'inferior ranks of the Neapolitan nation were by no means prepared for so great a change. Their minds, unenlightened by knowledge, did not expand at the idea of *liberty*; a term of which they could, indeed, scarcely be made to comprehend the import.' Of course neither the king nor his British allies, but the patriots themselves, were answerable for the miserable scenes which ensued upon the departure of the last gleam of the French bayonets.

In the foregoing account we do not find the slightest allusion to the tyrannies exercised by the patriots, while under the protection of the French. We read of these 'martyrs at the shrine of liberty being shut up in the dungeons of the castles, which they had surrendered,' but we do not find the smallest particle of commiseration for those English prisoners, and for those of their own countrymen, who had, but lately, been confined by these patriots in these very castles. No! They were '*state-prisoners*.' We love pity as a feeling of the heart, and we admire pathos as a figure of rhetoric, but we do not like to see it misapplied. Mr. B. has a tear only for republican woes; and we dare venture to assert that if the '*state-prisoners*' had been put on board the dismasted vessels, we should not have read of 'watery bastilles,' but of prisons *where the air might circulate, and where the genial heat of the sun might be felt*. This is not a flippant, but a well-grounded remark, we should not however have hazarded it, if we had not received a confirmation of the justice of

it by Mr. B.'s description of the seizure of the pope. We turned with some curiosity, to this part of the history, and found, as we expected, the tables reversed. Here the French and the patriots have the upper hand, and Mr. B.'s tone changes, as the squire's does in the fable, when he found that it was his own heifer which had done the injury. We had always understood that the aged pontiff and his cardinals had been plundered of their property, and that neither the age of Pius VI. his infirmities, nor the sanctity of his office, procured to him, from the banditti who dragged him away, even the common forms of personal respect. But we were mistaken—never were we more mistaken. His journey was less fatiguing, than a swing in one of Mr. Merlin's cars; he was '*removed*' across the Appennines and Alps to Briançon, whence, on the alarm caused by the approach of Suwarroff, he was again '*transferred*' to Valence. Here 'he occupied the *beautiful* apartments belonging to the ancient commandant of that fortress under the monarchy. Again he seemed to enjoy some repose, the fine gardens and delightful scenery of the surrounding country affording him much apparent pleasure.' What a consolation for the loss of a throne! We have not the former volumes of Mr. B.'s history before us, and we forget whether he thought that Messrs. Horne Tooke and Thelwall received ample compensation for the loss of their liberty, in the magnificent view of the rich bosom of the Thames, and of the Surrey hills, from their apartments in the Tower.

While we were writing the above paragraph at breakfast this very morning, October the 16th, 1805, the morning newspapers were brought in, and we met with such a curious confirmation of the propriety of our remark on the different representations of the same circumstance, according to the temper and party of the narrator, that we had a hearty laugh on the occasion. We will quote the passages, and perhaps our readers will smile at the remarkable coincidence. One paper mentioned that 'the greater part of our unfortunate countrymen who were at Verdun, have been removed to the castle of Vandreuil. This is an old building, defended by a moat, and situate in the midst of an unhealthy morass.' Another informed us, that 'part of the English prisoners hitherto detained at Verdun have been removed to the fine castle of Vandreuil, surrounded with *water* and *pleasant* prospects.'—*Utri creditis, Quirites?*

In the intervening account of the campaign in the north of Italy, Piedmont, and Switzerland, our author puts the cockade of his party in his pocket, and passes quietly through

the ranks of either army with the neutrality of an historian. We have a long list of names and a map of places, with little in the narration to condemn or to admire. The movements of the armies are related with exactness, but there is little of that animation, which glows in description, which transports us to the scene of action, and brings to the 'mind's eye' a perfect view of the rapid river, the extended plain, the towering citadel, the deep morass, the craggy mountain, and all the theatre of war.

The thirty-second book of this History opens with an account of the preparations for the invasion of Holland, which to a British politician, and indeed to the politician of every country, who sees things in their true light, must appear a very natural and a very commendable effort of the court of St. James', a generous attempt to deliver the United Provinces from a state of servitude and degradation, to restore them to their rank among the independent nations of Europe, and to render them once more a rich, flourishing, and happy people. Our author sees it under a very different point of view: he regards them as an expedition, which 'aimed at no less than the entire subversion of the Batavian republic;' and, as we know the event, we naturally looked forward, with the expectation of finding in this chapter some of the choicest figures of Mr. B.'s rhetoric, among which *misrepresentation* is not the most sparingly used. He opens with great glee, and concludes the very first paragraph with an impertinent sneer at our commander in chief. We by no means would wish that history should depart from her dignity, or desert the cause of truth, by concealing any error of government, or of the most distinguished person; but without undertaking to defend either the plan or the conduct of the expedition in question, we enter our protest against ill-manners, against bad temper, against petulance and scurrility.

We are informed that 'in every village the citizens took arms: the requisitions of the government were answered not by a cold and formal compliance, but with an emulation of eagerness; and multitudes offered on all sides, as volunteers, to join the army in North Holland.' We can suppose that the inhabitants* of the villages complied with the commands of the French generals, and that they fought against our troops with all that courage which is natural to men who are urged on by the bayonets of those behind them; but we know that the majority of the inhabitants of Amsterdam

* 'Citizens,' in Mr. B.'s vocabulary.

were anxiously looking for the arrival of their expected *deliverers*, the English. Men of Holland, are ye not made of flesh and blood like the men of Tuscany? Surely you are! and if our brave countrymen had succeeded in rescuing you from French tyranny and oppression, we verily believe that your long suppressed detestation would have broken forth, as it did in the breasts of the Tuscans. We know (though it did not suit our author's purpose to relate it) that after Scherer's defeat in Italy, hatred and revenge broke forth in every place that had suffered under French despotism. Insurrection burst forth every where, and the French, who were dispersed about the country, fell under the blows of the Italians, who were a few days before quite obedient. We verily believe, that the Dutch obedience under General Brune very much resembled Italian obedience under General Scherer, and that, if our army had succeeded, the French would have lost the United Provinces, and the *republic* of letters would have lost Mr. B.'s glowing description of the 'emulation' and 'eagerness of the volunteer citizens of the villages.' The French would have been massacred; the trees of liberty would have been cut down, and with them, (O! loss irreparable) all the gaudy flowers of Mr. Belsham's rhetoric.

The Duke of York's dispatches are sifted for the purpose of exposing two or three incautious expressions, which might naturally fall from the pen of any writer, in such a perilous and anxious situation, and which common feeling and good sense would attribute to the hurry of the moment. Even the common newspapers of the day are searched for the same malignant purpose, as if an expression (however intemperate) hastily dropped by an editor of a paper, could in any degree affect the wisdom of government. It really is curious to remark the sparing hand with which praise is bestowed on our troops, the cold expressions, which relate the bravery and victory of the British army. 'Another garland is added to the Gallic laurels,' but we look in vain for a single leaf to deck the brow of a Briton. General Daendels attacks the English with 'great spirit:' General Brune 'has two horses killed under him,' 'breaks the line of the English and Russians,' and '*drives* them from their several positions:' the English *run*, but the French only *withdraw*, and *retire*.

We have not yet even peeped into Mr. B.'s twelfth volume, and of course we do not know what he says of our victories in Egypt: but we must own that we tremble for the character of our brave soldiers in such hands. If Mr. B. in any future edition of the eleventh volume, should alter the ex-

pressions of 'asperity,' as he has professed to have done in the preceding volumes, he will find an ample catalogue of errata in this chapter. We have not quoted them, because we do not wish to blazon rudeness.

Our historian proceeds in the next place to describe the internal situation of France. This description occupies ten pages, in which the weakness and incapacity of the directory, and the plots and counterplots of the various factions, are well delineated. The fatal consequences of the 'Law of hostages' are exposed with propriety, and the whole view of the state of the nation is summed up with a spirit which we have not often occasion to applaud in this work. Mr. B.'s words are as follows:

'The folly, as well as wickedness of the law respecting departmental hostages, now became fully apparent; and the forced loan having proved very unproductive, the treasury was exhausted and without resource. The republic was rent with the rage of civil discord, the armies of France were defeated, and the enemy triumphant. Suspicion and fear pervaded every mind: public confidence was annihilated, and an insurmountable apathy, or rather despair, prevailed among those who had so long breathed ineffectual wishes for their country. Justice had become a name; patriotism a mask; liberty a phantom; and virtue a deception. Obscure and opposing machinations involved every one in perplexity: and the state appeared reeling, as it were, like a drunken Bacchanal, without either guide, guardian, or support.'

'All France felt the full force of her past and present evils, and the imperious necessity of establishing a better order of things. She required a government capable of repairing the ruins of the political edifice, or rather of reconstructing it on more solid and durable foundations. But by what miraculous interposition was this to be accomplished? By what superhuman means was confidence to be restored, was courage to be re-animated, was civil discord to be healed, and authority, now every where spurned at, to be invigorated and confirmed?' 'To solve these interesting questions, it is become necessary to revert to the history of that celebrated commander, who'—

So far all is well, and for the sake of the pleasure of giving praise without alloy, we would have omitted to censure the absurd epithets 'miraculous' and 'superhuman,' if our author had thought them necessary to describe the bold promptitude of Bonaparte in flying from Egypt to seize the reins of government in France: but Mr. B.'s temper and judgment will not permit us to enjoy that pleasure undiminished, even through a single page. Let our readers bear in their minds our author's account of the generous and li-

beral attempt of this country to deliver the Seven United Provinces; let them bear in their minds his sneers, his indecent exultation, at the failure of the attempt; and then let them endeavour (if they can) to restrain their indignation, while they peruse the conclusion of the paragraph which we have quoted:

—— 'in the spirit of romantic enterprise, had, in the beginning of the preceding year, bid adieu to his country in search of new adventures, and in the hope of acquiring fresh, and, if possible, more verdant laurels on the opposite side of the globe.'

What! was the invasion of Egypt, and the massacre of the inhabitants which ensued, merely a romantic enterprize, an adventure to acquire verdant laurels? For the credit of the British nation, for the credit of humanity, we will shew that we have men of virtue and of talent, who are capable of feeling as men ought to feel, and of describing events in their genuine colours. For the satisfaction of our readers we will present them with a description of the same event by an enlightened philosopher, a true lover of liberty, and a pious Christian. 'Recollect (says Mr. Hall, in his sentiments on a particular crisis of affairs) Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt, a country which had never given him the slightest provocation; a country so remote from the scene of his crimes, that it probably did not know there was such a man in existence; (happy ignorance, could it have lasted!) but while he was looking around him, like a vulture perched on an eminence, for objects on which he might gratify his insatiable thirst of rapine, he no sooner beheld the defenceless condition of that unhappy country, than he alighted upon it in a moment. In vain did it struggle, flap its wings, and rend the air with its shrieks, the cruel enemy, deaf to all its cries, had infixed his talons, and was busy in sucking its blood, when the interference of a superior power forced him to relinquish his prey and betake himself to flight.' In the name of our brave countrymen, in the name of justice, we return thanks to such a writer as Mr. Hall.

In the third page after that which announces the 'romantic enterprize in search of verdant laurels,' Mr. B. proceeds as follows:

'On the 1st of March the army moved towards Jaffa, the ancient Joppa. The trenches were immediately opened, and in a few days the breach appearing practicable, the place was carried by assault; and the greater part of the garrison, who made a resistance equally furious and obstinate, put to the sword.'

Bonaparte himself owned that the carnage was so great, that the 'horrors of war never appeared to him so hideous;' and yet Mr. B. records this assault, in which a garrison who defended themselves against an unprincipled invader, were put to the sword, without any other comment than that 'Jaffa was an acquisition of importance, being a secure depôt for stores.' It was a mere adventure, gentle reader! in search of verdant laurels. Our author afterwards, in a NOTE, observes, that 'such a procedure cannot be reconciled to the feelings of afflicted humanity;' but at the same time he enters into a long palliation of his celebrated hero's conduct, apparently with the most trembling anxiety, lest our admiration should be mixed with abhorrence. He follows the march of the French army through the defiles of Mount Carmel with shouts of exultation, in which we were almost tempted to join, in expectation that they were mere graces of history to introduce the British hero who stopped their career, in a more grand and conspicuous point of view. We ought to have known the style and temper of Mr. B.'s narration better than to suffer ourselves to be so deceived. It has been doubted whether Adam or the Devil is the hero of the Paradise Lost; and we find ourselves in a similar hesitation between Sir Sidney Smith and Bonaparte, in Mr. B.'s account of the siege of Acre. In commenting on the text, a French critic might very justly claim the distinction for the latter. Bonaparte's proclamation, in which he boasted of having overthrown all Christian establishments, is not allowed to be an impious declaration, but a piece of 'complaisance to the religion of Mahommed.' An open renunciation of the divine superiority of the Christian faith was, in Mr. B.'s ideas, mere complaisance! Sir Sidney Smith's animated detestation of the Corsican's cruelties are styled 'gross and virulent personalities, incompatible with decorum,' although Mr. B. allows that the 'massacre of the Turkish prisoners in cold blood has been corroborated.' What are our author's notions of decorum? Shall we look for them where our commander in chief is the subject of his history? Mr. B. dedicates a great part of a long note to an extenuation of the cruelty of the massacre of the Turkish prisoners, but Sir Sidney's want of courtesy admits of no palliation. What are Mr. B.'s notions of humanity? The same anxiety for the reputation of his hero (for upon a second reading we decidedly give that character to the French general) continues to the end of the chapter, and without a blush Mr. B. tells us, that Bonaparte quitted the siege, and retreated from Acre '*unattended with the slightest degree of military degra-*

dation.' Sir Sidney informs us that 'the French grenadiers absolutely refused to mount the breach any more over the putrid bodies of their unburied companions, sacrificed in former attacks by Bonaparte's impatience and precipitation, which led him to commit such palpable errors as even seamen could take advantage of.' What are Mr. B.'s notions of truth? So eager is he to lead his hero off with a flourish, that he hurries over the flagrant breach of honour and of war, in firing a volley of shot and shells, while a message by a flag of truce was under consideration, not knowing (as he declares) whether to denominate it an act of passionate indiscretion, or of artful design. Nay, so eager is he, that he hastens to sum up the number of towns taken by his hero, and the thousands killed or made prisoners by him, without stopping to explain any probable good consequences that might arise from the check thus given to the French in Syria, without decking the brow of the gallant Sir Sidney with a single leaf of laurel. What are Mr. B.'s notions of patriotism?

'On his arrival at Grand Cairo, the general and his soldiers were received by their *fellow citizens* with loud acclamations:' and after 'enjoying some repose in that great metropolis and centre of his conquests,' he acquired 'new laurels by a victory over the Turks at Aboukir.' The reader is hurried on without the respite of a moment for reflection on the mad ambition which gave rise to all these horrors of war, without time even for a sigh of commiseration on the unhappy victims. No! the mark of guilt on the forehead of the author of these woes of Egypt, is hidden from Mr. B.'s view by thick laurels, which to his eyes appear beautifully verdant, though they may owe their vivid hue to the moisture of the blood of our allies. What are Mr. B.'s notions of right and wrong? Mr. B. seems to admire humanity, truth, patriotism, and justice, but he does not take any of them as partners for life, but merely as partners at whist, where it depends on the chance of the cards whether they are his antagonists or his friends.

The arrival of Bonaparte in Paris is related with spirit, and the same may be said of the detail of the revolution which followed. We have an account of facts, without any developement of the secret intrigues from which events originated. Perhaps this cannot be expected from an historian who writes the annals of the times in which he lived; but surely our author does not shew much sagacity, in hesitating whether to ascribe the revolution to a preconcerted plan between Sieyes, Talleyrand, and Bonaparte. There cannot be a doubt of the fact. The ma-

jority of the votes in favour of the new constitution are given with a gravity which made us smile: and we think that the new constitution, though it commenced 'so brilliantly,' though it regulated the power and office of the 'three Consuls' with such precision, and though it so 'permanently secured the inviolability of every citizen's house,' &c. &c. &c. might very well with M. Cabanis's treatise on it, have been thrown into a note, instead of occupying so large a portion of the text in a History of Great Britain.

The remainder of the thirty-second book is almost wholly occupied by a just and well-written account of the transactions in India, which terminated in the death of Tippoo Sultaun, and with the restoration of the ancient royal house of Mysore. We should have been happy to close the account of this book with undiminished praise, but here again Mr. B.'s temper exhibits another freak, and destroys the harmony of our resolution. A single paragraph of a few lines at the end of the book is introduced, for the purpose of an eulogy on Kien Long, upwards of sixty-four years Emperor of China. Due praise is given to his virtue and to his talents, and also to the beauty of his person, and to the dignity and grace of his deportment. 'He is represented,' (Mr. B. tells us) 'as usually wearing a robe of yellow silk, girded with a blue sash; a cap or turban of black velvet, with a red tassel, and plume of peacock's feathers, and boots embroidered with gold; a costume truly oriental, and which may justly vie with the stars, garters, and coronets of European *vanity*."

True! And so they may vie with the glossy black small-clothes which warm and ornament a part of Mr. B.'s person; but what British blood can flow in his veins, what love of his country can he feel, if he promulgates this fatal truth to the whole world? We do not subscribe to the fact, and a jury of tailors, to whom we referred the point, confirmed the justice of our opinion: but what we mean to observe is, that if Mr. B's real sentiments are in favour of the peacock's feather, and of the embroidered boots, it was wrong in him to express his thoughts so fully. *Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

The thirty-third book contains events of the greatest magnitude and importance, and the spirit of our author's style in general suits the dignity of his subject. The debates on the overture of Bonaparte for peace, are given with tolerable fairness, and in the latter part of the book, the passage of the French over Mount St. Bernard, and the battle of Marengo, are narrated in an animated manner. We will not diminish our praise by an exposure of a few petulancies. We cannot, however, omit noticing the apparently implicit con-

fidence, which our author puts in Bonaparte's professions of religion, and of his submission to the sovereign will of the people, as if hypocrisy or ambition formed no part of his character.

The twelfth volume commences with the negotiation for an armistice between Great Britain and France, which our ministry very properly refused; but they were under the necessity of using some evasion, as they did not wish to be separated from their allies, nor on the other hand did they wish to break off the negotiation. An armistice by sea must have secured the French in the possession of Egypt and of Malta. Our author seizes, what he thinks a lucky opportunity, of praising the great diplomatic ability of M. Otto, and of exposing the 'egregious incapacity' of Lord Grenville.

In the month of February, 1800, an attempt was made to throw supplies into Malta, by a small squadron consisting of five sail, one of which was of the line. They were intercepted by Lord Nelson, who captured the flag-ship, and one of the frigates. The Guillaume Tell also, of eighty-six guns, endeavouring to escape from Malta, was taken, after a gallant resistance. Our historian tells us that these advantages were counterbalanced by the accidental blowing up of the Queen Charlotte, mounting 120 guns. If Mr. B. can possible find out any circumstance which may counterbalance British success, he always seems very ready to do it: but we cannot agree that the loss of the Queen Charlotte (deeply as we may deplore the event) in any manner counterbalanced the effect of that victory, which by cutting off the supplies sent to Malta, ultimately gained us possession of that important island, and of its prodigious fortifications. Mr. B. concludes his account of the disaster, as follows:

'This was the ship on board of which Lord Howe hoisted his flag on the memorable 1st of June; and in these ships the king and royal family were entertained, on occasion of the visit made by them to the fleet after that splendid victory. Such are the mournful reverses of fortune and of fate, and so frail is the foundation on which rests the fabric of human vanity.'

We beg leave to class this solemn reflection on British vanity, with our author's observations on Kien Long's boots.

The affairs of Egypt, and the convention of El Arish occupy the chief part of the beginning of the thirty-fourth book. The character of General Kleber, and the magnanimous conduct of Sir Sidney Smith, have their due praise; but the English ministry come in for their full share of blame, without any allowance for that state of things in Europe,

which must justify their determination with respect to the French army in Egypt.

In recording the arrival of Lord Nelson in England, and his honourable reception by his countrymen, our author's spleen breaks forth again in a manner which provokes our indignation. He informs us, that 'the public saw in him only the hero who had achieved the most splendid name of modern ages: that unhappy part of his conduct during his abode at Naples, which blended itself, like the deadly nightshade, with the immortal verdure of his laurels, was known comparatively to few.' We believe that the malignant spirit, which warps Mr. B.'s judgment in viewing the actions of his own countrymen, was felt comparatively by few: that malignant spirit, which will not suffer him to join in any exultation at British glory, and under the influence of which every British laurel withers at his touch. This censure is severe, but we will not retract one word of it: for let our readers learn with astonishment, that this same historian, who is so eager to twine nightshade with British laurel, is, as we have observed, tremblingly alive to any censure on Gallic perfidy or cruelty. In this very volume, (p. 497,) Sir Robert Wilson is severely censured by our author for his 'unnecessary invectives' against the First Consul: the poisoning of the sick is most earnestly denied by him; and because he cannot confute the evidence concerning the massacre at Jaffa, he attempts very studiously to palliate it, by searching for something parallel in the annals of British history, which he thinks he has found in the conduct of Henry V. at the battle of Agincourt! From what soil does this sensibility spring, which would willingly tread under foot the British laurel, and yet touches that, which decks the brow of a Corsican, as it would the sensitive plant, with the utmost caution and with the most tender delicacy? Our bookseller positively assures us that Mr. B.'s history is not a translation from the French.

It was naturally to be expected that Lord Nelson should be received by the city of London in the most hospitable and most honourable manner. Our author's spite (we would not have used this word if we could have found a better,) is here so ludicrous, that we shall quote the passage for the amusement of our readers.

'Being invited by the city of London, on the 9th of November, to dine at the Guildhall of the metropolis, a sword studded with diamonds, of exquisite workmanship, was presented to him by the chamberlain: who, on this interesting occasion, pronounced a *gorgeous civic* oration, in which the exploits of his lordship were

extolled as superior to the heroic acts of Sesostris. He was, moreover, complimented as having exemplified, in the pious *non nobis domine* of his modest dispatches, "that virtue which the heathen world could not emulate." And his lordship, with equal complacency, as if equal in value, received the sword and the panegyric.'

We recollect that the chamberlain, in the name of the generous citizens of London, and in the warmth of that moment of hospitality and joy, pronounced a panygeric on Lord Nelson, in which perhaps his expressions were not studied with the lingering coolness of cautious precision; but what does Mr. B. mean by a *gorgeous civic* oration? Aye! here's the rub. By the association of the two words 'gorgeous' and 'civic,' we are verily inclined to believe, that a sneer was intended at the chamberlain's purple robe and gold chain, in which he was of course habited on the occasion. Do not be too proud of your honors, Mr. Chamberlain, there is nightshade for you also! Our author seems to have the same antipathy to stars, garters, coronets, robes, diamond hilted swords, and magistrates, that a 'puritan has to the sound of an organ,' and we must class this petulant paragraph also with the reflections on the *vanity* of the royal visit to Lord Howe, and its counterpart, the sage remarks on Kien Long's boots. When a bowl has got a wrong bias, where will it not run? For a justification of Bonaparte, Mr. B. carries us back to the battle of Agincourt, and for the sake of a sneer at our knights of the garter, the manes of Kien Long are disturbed; and yet in the latter part of the same volume our author relates with great complacency, the entry of Cardinal Caprara into Paris, 'who was escorted by an honorary guard of cavalry, the crosier being borne before him to the palace:' he also gives us the cardinal's fulsome speech, with Bonaparte's pious reply, without a single comment. The establishment of the legion of honor is announced with great gravity, but we do not here find the least hint at human vanity.

Scarcely had we finished the above sentence, when the sound of cannon interrupted our attention, and upon inquiring the cause, we found that the British fleet is victorious, but that Nelson is no more!!!

> 'Peace to the brave, who sink to rest,
> By all their country's wishes blest.'

We were preparing to continue our minute examination of Mr. Belsham's History, but our bosoms swell at this moment with feelings so ill according with that calm patience, which would be necessary for a dissection of his FRENCH-

English work, that we might be betrayed into intemperate censure; and as it would be hardly worth the while to make another article of it in our next number, we shall here conclude, briefly observing, that whoever possesses a regular file of opposition papers, possesses a history of Great Britain equally full of good matter, equally liberal, and equally impartial with Mr. Belsham's Annals.

Art. III.—*A Description of the Island of St. Helena, containing Observations on its singular Structure and Formation, and an Account of its Climate, Natural History, and Inhabitants. Small 8vo.* Phillips. 1805.

THE island which affords the subject of the volume now before us, is an object of considerable curiosity and importance. To the philosopher it supplies ample scope for investigation in its organized and mineral productions, as well as in its grander features. To the statesman and the merchant, its value far outmeasures any estimation which might be rashly made of it from its magnitude, its population, or its wealth. They equally admire it as a safe harbour, placed, as it were, benevolently in the midst of a wide ocean; as a station secure from the violence of external attack; and as the first resting spot for the gigantic genius of the commerce of Britain, who there pauses, ere by another stride he embraces the dominion of the peninsula of the Indies.

We conceive therefore that this account of a settlement in so many respects important, is likely to be well received by the public, if the fidelity and acuteness of the author, and the excellence of his composition, shall bear any proportion to the subject he has chosen; and if our verdict in his favour may promote the success of the work, it is not likely to want a reasonable share. With some exceptions, we think the performance entitled to considerable notice.

It is dedicated to our mercantile sovereigns of the east, who are earnestly and humbly entreated to receive under their fostering wing this chicken of literature, that, anxious for the success of his attempt, fails not to beset with arguments and flattery the ears of their majesties of Leadenhall-street. Like most authors, however, who treat of particular places, he is by no means insensible to the merits of his subject, and occasionally exaggerates its importance farther than our phlegmatic fancies are disposed to follow. The merits of the East India company are surely not so high as are here represented in their support and patronage of St. Helena,

which would have yet reared its barren head to the storms of a thousand years, had it by nature been placed out of the tract of the company's shipping. We feel and highly applaud that liberal humanity which has procured the blessings of personal freedom to the negroes of that island; and it is to be hoped and expected that the measure of emancipation will turn out not more consonant to humanity and religion, than agreeable to the justest views of enlightened policy. The permanence of these boons of the company, which, according to our author, will remain when the empire of the east shall have passed away as a shadow, and left no vestige of their power and greatness, appears by no means the most evident of propositions. In such an event, it cannot be doubted that St. Helena would follow the fate of the Indies, and vanish from the list of peopled countries, with the causes which upheld its existence. The company, if they still remained such, would consider it as an expensive and useless incumbrance; and the inhabitants, accustomed to European supplies even of provisions, and unable to subsist without them, would quit a spot where life could no longer be sustained, and leave only some miserable remnant of negro population to testify the departed and fugacious prosperity of a commercial station.

In a preface, the author informs us, that for a period of five weeks, he exerted his utmost diligence to observe and record the natural phenomena of the island. The observations are therefore so far original; and for his theories, they are, as he tells us, the best that occurred to him. Though these confessions seem very commendable for their candour and their modesty, he yet fears that he may have treated the subjects of geology and mineralogy too profoundly for the vulgar, and too slightly for the adept. But good theories of the changes which have occurred on the surface of our globe are, we fear, never likely to originate from the consideration of local phenomena, where the observer, strongly impressed with the present objects, forgets the structure of other soils, and, like a late French traveller,* mounted on the summit of a hill in the Isle de France, half conceives himself another Jove, and deals out strata and rocks, urges the torrent of the deluge, animates the earthquake, and rouses the slumbering volcano, where he pleases, and howsoever it may suit the wildness of his fancies.

In the first chapter the author gives an account of the

---

* See Appendix to Vol. IV. of the Critical Review.

mineralogical appearances of St. Helena, which in every respect seem worthy of much attention. The chief part of the rocks of the island is basaltic, in many instances of an uncommonly regular and columnar structure. These columns are occasionally beautifully curved or oblique, and sometimes shivered into minute fragments. The central parts are by far the most compact, and the lower and upper portions, where the rock terminates in what our author calls clay or volcanic matter, are either honeycombed, or terminate in round knobs. The ever intruding idea of igneous operations has led him to distinguish, by the term scorification, various appearances of blackness, which probably have arisen from the operation of time. The rock runs insensibly into a hard clay. The whole is considered by the author as being arranged in strata, some of which are characterized as obviously volcanic. The degree of mineralogical discrimination displayed in the work is, however, not always very great, and the propensity of the author to the system of fire, is easily discernible. It is of the highest importance to refer minerals to their proper species, when they form the groundwork of any reasoning on the origin and formation of the strata of the earth. This correctness, we fear, our author does not always attain. One of his observations seems hostile to the opinion of the agency of subterraneous heat in the fusion of basalt. Certain cells and caverns, which are noticed as frequently occurring in the summits and bases of the rocky strata of St. Helena, are sometimes met with in the central parts of it, and in these instances the cavities are often filled with a large quantity of pure water.

The bed of rock is asserted by this author to be frequently confined both above and below, by a mass of light, porous, and scorified fragments, cemented together by a lava, various in its texture and its colour. The strata of rock, alternate with those of fragments, and the thickness of both, varies very remarkably, as well as their direction, which is sometimes straight, and often waving or serpentine. There are also said to be strata of clay regularly accompanying the others. Many of these phenomena will unquestionably strike the reader as little reconcileable with the formation of these masses by fire, at least in these latter periods, and by volcanic interference. It is remarkable that near the sea the clay is found only in thin layers, but further inland it is more abundant, and is the principal matter of which many large hills are composed. Among these argillaceous mountains are to be observed numerous perpendicular *strata*, as our author rather whimsically calls them, which penetrate the horizon-

tal beds, and are composed of various-coloured rock, all as regularly fissured as the stones of a building.

The second chapter is opened with some very well expressed observations on the theory of the phenomena described in the first part of the work. The author imagines it past the shadow of a doubt that St. Helena has been the seat of volcanic fires, of which, however, he offers no better evidence than the existence of spongy and vitrified stones, sometimes cemented by what he calls lava, and of the summits and bases of basaltic rocks, blackened and scorified by fire. The second of these observations must be far from confirming the truth of the first in the mind of the cautious geologist. Though the agency of fire may be sufficiently probable in many of the phenomena described, yet we believe it not to have been always of that volcanic kind imagined here, and we earnestly desire an account of the mineralogical phenomena of this island from some of those able and excellent philosophers who now exist in England. We do not know any spot which promises so rich a reward to the labours of the industrious cultivator of science. In the work under present consideration, though extremely interesting, we look in vain for that precision of knowledge which distinguishes the philosopher and promotes the progress of philosophy. To this indeed the author does not aspire, and his ambition may be well satisfied with the fruits he has reaped, though another and a more plentiful harvest remains to crown the exertions of scientific perseverance. In fact, it is impossible to expect any thing like a satisfactory or plausible theory of the changes which have occurred in the structure of the island of St. Helena, from any person who is not thoroughly acquainted with those theories which profess to explain the cause and origin of the structure of the crust of our earth, and who is not readily able to distinguish by an appropriate and accurate name, every stratum or mineral production which may arrest his attention. Nothing can be more unpleasant than to hear, as we frequently do in this work, of strata distinguished by the general and confused names of stone, blue stone, shivered stone, red earth, volcanic matter, and so forth.

We have of late years heard so much of extinct volcanoes, that we listen perhaps with unreasonable scepticism to any further attempts to extend the dominion of Pluto; and after all that this work contains, to prove the volcanic origin of St. Helena, we perceive a saving clause at the latter part of the discussion, wherein it is acknowledged that 300 years ago, when the island was discovered, the very summits of the

extinct volcanoes were covered with herbs and plants. There are no earthquakes, no signs of submarine volcanoes, no sulphureous, bituminous, or inflammable matters, to testify the departed power and fallen magnificence of these mountains of fire.

The atmosphere of St. Helena is pure, the temperature moderate, and the climate healthy; nor are the inhabitants here pursued by the desolating agitations of the air and the earth, which terrify and harass the tropical islands, and counterbalance the rich gifts which nature has otherwise bestowed on them. Rain, however, falls so sparingly on this island, as to be a source of serious inconvenience. This deficiency seems very justly attributed by the author to the smallness of the island, and the remoteness of other land; its heat thus seldom differing much from that of the trade wind, which sweeps its surface with an unvarying and never ceasing blast. In these circumstances it is pleasing to remark that this little spot is free from every peculiar or malignant disease, and affords a joyful and renovating retreat to those whom the parching heats of the Indies have driven from the cares of avarice or the toils of military enterprize. The small pox has, it is asserted, never found its way to this spot; and the canine race may live unmolested by the terror of the halter or the pond, since there the curse of their kind, the hydrophobia, is unknown.

At the time of its discovery, St. Helena was found to possess several shrubs and plants, of which a few are peculiar to it. Some pages are spent in the consideration of the way in which these were conveyed to this island after its fires had ceased to burn, and the heat of its soil become sufficiently moderate to permit the growth of plants. The reader, however will rise from the perusal just as wise as he sat down, unless he adopt the sentiments of the Grecian philosopher, and think it a great deal to know that he is ignorant. Had it not been, however, for this fiery theory which burns in the brain of our author, he might have recollected difficulties enough of a similar kind which it might puzzle him to explain, in every quarter of the globe. In these times, however, St. Helena is provided with trees and plants from various and distant regions, and so mild and favourable are the air and soil, that the productions of the most distant and different climates meet and prosper in its bosom. Fruits of various sorts abound, the orange, the apple, the peach, the grape, and the olive. The peach-tree seemed particularly congenial to the soil, and grew wild or cultivated in every corner of the island, and sprung spontaneously from every crevice

in the rocks: the very hogs wallowed in the luxury of a peach diet. But all human blessings totter on the limits of destruction. While every one looked forward to the continuance of this source of pleasure, there came a vine from the Cape or the Mauritius, and with the vine came an insect which immediately attacked the peach trees, and has almost extirpated them from the island. 'An old inhabitant,' says our author, 'describing and lamenting the ravages it had made, could not forbear crying out, the tears almost starting from his eyes, "We would with pleasure have given up to it half the trees of the place, had it only spared our peaches, which we valued so much."

St. Helena produces no sort of corn nor does it possess a soil fit for the cultivation of grain. Our author therefore very properly suggests the introduction of vegetables of other kinds, which might serve to avert the dangers or alleviate the horror of a famine. He advises especially the cultivation of the palm, and among the palms prefers the cocoa-nut. With these indeed he seems quite in love, and assures us that man wants but little that is not supplied by this admirable tree, upon which he expatiates in a long eulogium. It grows often on the margin of the ocean, and its nut is carried by the waves to distant countries, on the sands of whose shores it is buried and produces a tree. 'In this manner,' says our author, 'palms have sprung up in some uninhabited islands, where no trees grew at so recent a period as that of the discovery of India by the route of the Cape of Good Hope.' And here the writer cannot avoid mentioning a curious fact regarding the manner in which a new species of cocoa-nut was first introduced on the west coast of the peninsula of India. 'The natives of Travancore had long observed that strong westerly winds blew upon their shore great quantities of cocoa-nuts, which being of a peculiar form, they called the sea cocoa-nut, supposing that it grew at the bottom of the sea; and from their ignorance of geography, not knowing where else it could be produced. According to their accounts, many ages passed before they became sensible of the advantage of attending to the culture of this plant. It was left to the spontaneous efforts of nature, and sprang up here and there among the sand. It is now, however, considered as one of their most useful trees; and is in some respects reckoned more valuable than the common cocoa-nut. It probably came from the Sechelles, or some of the remote Maldives, where the same species is still found.'

There follow in this place many judicious remarks on the different species of trees, the natives of other countries

which it would be advisable or practicable to rear in St. Helena. Having already noticed this work at so great length, we cannot make any remarks on this part of it, which, however, we hope will call attention where it will be more useful to obtain it. The last chapter gives some account of the inhabitants, who, according to this representation, seem at first sight to be blessed beyond the common lot of humanity with long life, exemption from disease, a healthful offspring, and beautiful women. But carking care lurks in ambush, and the natives are infected with an insane discontent at their situation, and a longing desire to visit England, which they have never seen. Jealousies, also, scandal and party work, prevail here with all the force they usually obtain in confined situations and a limited society.

In this narrow spot the arrival of East Indiamen is the signal of joy and hilarity. The men, it seems, expect to make money of the passengers, by letting lodgings, and the ladies do all they can to be married, which we conjecture is not peculiar to St. Helena. The departure of these vessels, like the knell of death, extinguishes the voice of merriment, and disperses the gay parties who had crowded to the shores; and so associated are the ideas of joy with the appearance of the company's shipping, that a native lady of the island observed once, that 'the arrival of the Indiamen in England must make London very gay.'

This narrowness of idea may appear surprising, but the men seem to have the same limited notions from the following anecdote.

'As the writer of this was one day walking with a gentleman who had never been out of the island, they stopped to look at a small spot of ground, where the vegetation was very exuberant, when the gentleman, lifting up his hands, cried out with great fervour, "If St. Helena were all as fruitful as this place, it would be the noblest and richest country in the world." Yet the island is only twenty-eight miles round, and hardly exceeds in extent the larger parishes of England.

Before we conclude, we cannot resist the pleasure of extracting a short passage regarding the negroes of St. Helena, of great importance to those who would confirm the arguments for the possibility of our West India islands supplying their own stock of blacks.

'The blacks here long remained under the absolute and uncontrouled dominion of their masters, till complaints of the oppression and abuses that this gave rise to, induced

the court of directors to place them under the immediate protection of the magistracy, and to put a stop to all further importation of slaves. Several regulations were at the same time enacted to render their situations more easy and comfortable, by which they seem to have been encouraged to marry and propagate: for it is a fact, that before these regulations were established, there was an annual loss of about ten in a hundred. But since the blacks have been placed under the immediate protection of the magistracy, and all further importation of them prohibited, they have increased.' This fact requires no comment—it speaks for itself.

Upon the whole, our opinion of this work is very favourable: it every where shews marks of an active and intelligent mind; the facts newly brought forward are numerous and important; the style is vigorous, and not without elegance; and the perusal of it will afford an agreeable and instructive amusement to the general reader, for whose inspection it is chiefly designed.

ART. IV.—*The Life and Pontificate of Leo the Tenth. By William Roscoe. 4 Vols. 4to.* Cadell *and* Davies. *6l.* 6s. 1805.

THE perfect orator, whom Cicero has shadowed out to us, the glowing imagery of Johnson in his description of a perfect poet, must necessarily fall far below that comprehensive idea, which should figure an author capable of undertaking a general history of literature. In a vigorous and patient mind, he must combine the opposites of deep research and subtle genius; must thoroughly understand the languages of Europe, both ancient and modern; must familiarize his pen to the elegant discriminations of taste, and the technical distinctions of art and science; must develope each secret spring of political action; must illustrate and correct all former writers, whether in the luminous page of history, or the obscure deductions of schoolmen. Finally, he must divest himself of all bias, religious and national. And to every other quality we have enumerated, the addition of permanent health, constant assiduity, and a life extended beyond the usual limits of mortality, are indispensable.

We might add the absolute necessity of travel, and the evident advantages derived from the conversation of scholars and artists; but we have already proved it impossible that such a phenomenon should exist. Nay, we cannot

impute to literature even the embryo production of such an attempt. In this age of universal illumination, when original labour has been exhausted, when modern taste and philosophical research, unblushingly pilfer the weighty stores of their ancestors; when the science of bibliography has superseded the science of books; when the bookseller caters for the author, and prescribes the limits of his performances; amid the compendious epitomes and voluminous collections of the present day, and in a word the *charlatanerie* of modern learning, no literary quacks, no eminent scholars, have endeavoured to furnish us with that grand desideratum, from which both, though from separate causes, have shrunk with dread and hesitation.

We have hitherto stated the insurmountable difficulties attending a general history of literature; viewing, however, the subject in a particular point, neither the same causes nor effects are demonstrable. We shall now have occasion cursorily to mention, and to enlarge more fully hereafter, on the meritorious labours of those indefatigable writers, who may without impropriety be classified into three divisions, in reference to their scientific research. The studies of the former, are of all ages and of all nations; of the latter, strictly national. The elucidation of distinct epochs, the elegant and ornamental discussion of those periods of literature, whose pre-eminence has gained them the flattering epithet of *'golden,'* belongs to the first class. They have illustrated the age of Pericles, in Greece; of the Ptolemies, in Egypt; of Augustus, in Rome. Some have bent their studies to the revival of letters exclusively; some to the exclusive history of the reformation. The golden ages of Leo X. in Italy, of Ximenes in Spain, of Louis XIV. in France, and of Anne in England, have been delineated with beauty, spirit, and fidelity. In the introductory volume of Robertson's Charles V. we perhaps more admire the compression of the multifarious subjects it contains, from the restless want we feel of general illustration, than from the beauty of chastised style, and luminous observation. To the second class, the voluminous catalogue of those authors is attached, who have distinctly treated of some particular art or science. Painting, architecture, music, and the mathematics, have enjoyed their several annalists. Yet the comprehension and arrangement of any one of those subjects in all its parts, is a Herculean labour; and Warton's History of Poetry alone will give us the melancholy proof, that genius and erudition are insufficient to embrace a subject so extensive. It might be added, that the 'Bibliotheca' of Fabri-

cius, and the varied essays of the 'Academie des Inscriptions,' too frequently humiliate the student, who had rashly conceived that initiation in the mysteries of literature bordered on perfection. The last, and most prolific class of writers on literary subjects, bent their attention to national objects, by making which their exclusive study, the effect of their labours has uniformly been most judicious, interesting, and satisfactory. Even the *Catalogues Raisonèes* have not wanted utility, and general application. But when we examine the surprising efforts of Tiraboschi, the ponderous, though unfinished productions of Mazzuchelli, the laborious minuteness of Crescimbeni, we are lost in admiration. The *Memoires pour Servir à l'Histoire*, &c. of their great men, among the French, have abundantly supplied, by domestic anecdote, and patient curiosity, those portions of historical truth, which the professed chronicler, either from the want of leisure, or of materials, has declined insertion in his more ample work. That we may delay no longer on this subject, it may not be amiss to suggest the infinite importance which the student and the private gentleman must daily feel to be attached to the biographical books, which for several years have cast a lustre on the literary endeavours of our countrymen.

Our high ideas of the merits of Mr. Roscoe, exemplified in his beautiful History of Lorenzo de' Medici—exemplified still more strongly in some of his inedited manuscripts which we have indulged ourselves in perusing, brought conviction to our minds, when we were advertised of the publication of the Life and Pontificate of Leo X. that however impossible it might be that the grasp of *one* man should seize on the universal literature of even *one* age, yet that a nearer approach to perfection might fairly be expected in the historian of Liverpool, than in his predecessors or contemporaries. We were inclined, in anticipation, to undervalue Tiraboschi, to abandon Muratori, to shut our Jortin and our Robertson, in the full expectation of new lights and discussions rendered more interesting, as the result of controversies which have agitated the learned since Erasmus was embalmed by Jortin, and Luther by Robertson. It may, indeed, very justly be asked us, by what right did we expect in the professed Life of Leo X. a general history of Europe and its literary pursuits during that period? To this question we should calmly reply, that knowing how short the life of Leo really was, how uninteresting the individual exertions of his mind, or actions of his arm, how connected with and dependant on the life of the pontiff, were the

general politics and the private history of the times, we seriously did not conceive (as the fact has proved) that four volumes quarto, with four enormous appendices, besides a preface, notes, and dissertations, could possibly be occupied by the mere biography of the Italian priest. We mention this *in limine*, as an objection which may not improbably be raised by those sensible gentlemen, who wish to confine our author to the narrow limits of biography.

The readers of this Review probably may at this moment feel the same sensations towards Mr. Roscoe's performance, before they have pushed their inquiries beyond the title-page, which we felt, when it was announced for publication. Disappointment, however, is a grievous draw-back on partiality in literature. Our readers will probably feel the same disappointment with ourselves, and unprepared as we have been to expect an anticlimax in our favourite author, let us manfully resolve in future to resist with coyness the flattering impulse of a first regard, lest, in the subsequent destruction of our hopes, it should render us morose and acrimonious.

We were inclined, from the particular bent of our studies, from the individual esteem we bear for the author, as far as that character is compromised—from the admiration, the surprize, which is naturally excited in us when we reflect that these stores of learning have been amassed by an attorney in the north, (a circumstance highly glorious to himself, and delightful to his British reader,)—to anticipate the judgment of the public: nay, to sin against that public, and to anticipate our own. 'Victas damus manus.' The impropriety of such an idea is now most lamentably confessed; and we have been justly amerced in the fine not only of reading, but of commenting on our mistaken prejudices. When we perused the first volume, we forgave a great deal, under the hopes of turning over a new leaf; in the second we became sceptics; in the third we were disgusted; and after the perusal of the fourth, we found it necessary to have recourse to 'Watson's Theological Tracts,' to preserve us in the good old cause of orthodoxy, from which we had unwittingly and momentarily swerved.

Notwithstanding the due fine imposed upon intemperate zeal, a just sense of the propriety which caused the exaction, superinduced a rigid fulfilment, and compelled us most conscientiously to toil through the text, notes, and appendix, *more than once*, to examine the quotations on which Mr. Roscoe supported himself, with unusual attention; and occasionally to refer to those quotations on which Mr. Roscoe

unfortunately did not support himself. We then attempted to apply to him the modes of classification which we have discussed above: but be that mode fanciful, or be it not, we found that Leo X. as a species, was incomprehensible under any of our genera. It then naturally occured to us, that a patient analysis of this work, continued from chapter to chapter, however dull it might cause us to appear, would most fairly illustrate the object we had in view; but a thought very naturally suggested itself, that in the servile imitation of a vicious plan, our own good sense might eventually be impeached.

With the independent impudence natural to reviewers, an impudence, however, which we in this instance shall maintain without fear of reproof, we purpose to anatomize Mr. Roscoe's work, and to deliver our lecture on the four morbid members of which it is composed—a lecture which, while it compels us occasionally to enlarge on those disagreeable subjects, which involve the diseased structure of the interior, shall not prevent us from discriminating the nerves, the muscles, the *contour* of figure, which has lent a seeming grace to the exterior.

It was impossible to do justice to Mr. Roscoe by any other distribution of his book. To descant on it as a biographical memoir, would have been an outrage to common sense; to have discussed its historical matter, in consideration of it as a general history, would have raised from their cerements the indignant manes of Guicciardini and Commines; to have spoken of its scientific and classical knowledge, might have eventually condemned us to the pencil of Gillray, or the rod of Eton; and our approval of the moral and religious principles of the work, might have rendered us obnoxious to that self-instituted tribunal, the Society for the Suppression of Vice.

These prefatory remarks sufficiently announce the censure which they precede; the justice of which censure shall be established on the irrefragible proofs of quotation and indubitable inferences. In the first instance we will dispatch the preface; and after mature consideration, shall divide our strictures of text and appendix conjointly, under the four following heads:

1. We shall consider Mr. Roscoe, in his assumed character of a biographer.

2. We shall endeavour to trace him as a general historian, as the retailer of Machiavelli and Paruta, not less than the avowed copyist of Guicciardini.

3. We shall consider the subject of literature, (a subject, unfortunately, little considered by Mr. Roscoe) and shall

include under the same general term, the progress of the arts in the age of Leo X.

4. We shall humbly offer a correction of the manner in which Mr. Roscoe has analysed the religion of the times.

The principles and the style of the writer shall be considered in each of the above capitularies, when the occasion offers; and while the praise that is really due, is not unsparingly bestowed, it is trusted that the reproof will be allowed warrantable, by the simple transcriptions of letter-press from the 'Life of Leo X.' into the Critical Review.

Of prefaces there are sundry kinds, the 'dedicatory,' the 'deprecatory,' the 'insolent,' the 'namby-pamby,' and the 'humble.' The preface before us is a non-descript, as far as relates to the above distinctions. We had almost forgotten to mention a gruff frontispiece of Leo X which would scare a more timid heart than we possess, from the exercise of its duty. Comeliness and exactness in the division of letter-press and notes, the balancing the weight of text against the weight of appendix, might naturally have induced a suspicion that the public would have been delighted with a less gloomy portrait of Leo than that which terrifies us in the outset. The picture was doubtless an image of the mind; and we are inclined to believe our author sufficiently disinterested, to have caused to be inserted a fair and exact copy from Raffaello. In a book, however, written for effect, we would, without a sneer, have recommended this plate to a banishment in the index to volume IV.

Mr. Roscoe informs us, that he was led by imperceptible degrees to a situation in which he could scarcely with either propriety or credit, have declined the task. The sequel will shew how far he has consulted his credit by the publication; but we fully agree with him in the next page, wherein he informs us that his undertaking called for exertions beyond what his talents could supply. He timidly avows the union which he has admitted, of 'individual biography with general history:' but it may be fair to ask, whether the biography of Leo X. alone, as an insulated period in the history of Europe, would even have been worth the recital. In Leo X. there was nothing great; he was an intriguer far less famous than his predecessors: equal to them in all the malevolent passions of the heart, he yielded to them only in subtlety: his reign was disastrous to the religion of which he was supreme: he was the tool of low buffoons and flatterers; and his efforts in the cause of reviving literature may be placed in a secondary point of view, when we arrive at the consideration of those causes which first resuscitated genius, and

which only owe to him that they were not again extinguished in darkness. A reign of gloomy self-willed tyranny, actuated by the comprehensive term 'nepotism,' of treachery and avowed dereliction from those principles which bind man to man, would ill have suited the colouring of an elegant pen. But Leo X. fell in with times of high import, and however his name may direct the dates on the top of each page, few actors have less to do in the story than the manager himself. Our objection then is forcible against a general history, which enlarges on trifles, and omits many of the most grand and most unexampled historical illustrations, and many of those causes which by crumbling the papal jurisdiction, superinduced new laws of war and peace, new codes of society, and new information on those subjects, which the gloom of ignorance and superstition had obscured. The general history might certainly have *generalised* our ideas on these points without unnecessary amplification. There was sufficient room for retrenchment; but to these subjects there will be an opportunity of returning shortly.

The crabbed details of Italian politics, during the allowed assumption of Papal arrogance, are in no respect amusing: to the philosopher, however, they are interesting; to the historian, necessary: but it was reserved for the luminous remark of Mr. Roscoe (Pr. p. vi.) to insinuate that 'the siege of Pisa was as long and as eventful as the celebrated siege of Troy!' We will not attempt, like Mr. Bryant, to discredit the glories of this siege: but while we confess our anterior ignorance of this stupendous exploit to the extent insisted on by our author, we cannot but suggest, that the simple reason may have been, that Mr. Roscoe commemorates the one, and Homer the other.

Paulus Jovius has written a Life of Leo X. Mr. Roscoe has not well characterised him. He partook, with all the historians of his age, of a decided and splenetic partiality for the district of his birth, which led him into unfair conclusions on the abilities and actions of his contemporaries, whom the distance of a few miles consigned to the jurisdiction of some hostile duke or marquis. Robertson, if we are not misinformed, while doubting on the subject to which he should apply his talents, so gloriously devoted afterwards to his Charles V., had meditated the history of these times. Collins, the poet, published proposals for his execution of a similar plan. Mr. Warton entertained ideas of the same nature; and the modesty of Mr. Roscoe will doubtless induce him to unite with the world in vain regrets that their intended labours have been superseded.

Monsignore Angelo Fabroni paid Mr. Roscoe the compliment to cause his life of Lorenzo de' Medici to be translated into Italian by the Cavaliero Mecherini: Fabroni wrote a life, in Latin, of Leo X. but Mr. Roscoe has not returned him the compliment of setting about a translation. He proceeds in a tolerably fair statement of the sources fromwhence he derives his information; and were we here inclined to cavil, we might justly declare that the obligations he is under to Tiraboschi, desarved a more ample and open acknowledgment. To travel in the walks of Italian literature without Tiraboschi, is to attempt a labyrinth unassisted by a clue. We could have wished never to recur to the abortive History of Poggio Bracciolini, by Mr. Shepherd. Mr. R. did not here study effect. We now come to a compressed and succinct examination of the four several points, which we have established as the landmarks of our criticism.

Pursuant to the plan we have adopted, the epitomized biography of Leo X. shall first pass in review before us, unattached, as far as possible, to the transactions which refer solely to those of his contemporaries, who were not immediately implicated with him.

The subject of this memoir was born December 11, 1475. His original name was Giovanni de' Medici. He was the son of Lorenzo de' Medici, whose conduct in the direction of Florence during a varied series of events, has been better known to our countrymen since the publication of his life by Mr. Roscoe. Giovanni was intended *early* for the church; since he received the tonsura, or insigne of his future profession, before he had attained his eighth year. His father was rather fond of accumulating pluralities on his infant son, who, at the above tender age, was appointed abbot of Fonte-dolce by Lewis XI. King of France, which appointment was followed in a few months by the investiture of the rich monastery of Passignano, bestowed upon him by Pope Sixtus IV. The particulars of this singular instance of ecclesiastical promotion, and of the additional horours heaped upon Giovanni de' Medici, are given by Lorenzo himself, with great simplicity, in his *Ricordi*, from which Mr. Roscoe himself has translated them. Vol. i. p. 12.

Well might Fabroni exclaim at this period of his work, 'Good God! what pluralities hath this single youth accumulated,' when we consider that he was at the same time canon of three cathedrals; rector of six parishes; prior of Monte Varchi; precentor of St. Antonio at Florence; proposto of Prato; superior of fourteen abbies; abbot of two dioceses; and in 1510, archbishop of Amalfi. In 1488, after some

intrigues, not unusual among the Italians of the day, at the tender age of thirteen, he was made cardinal. His mind was expanded by the instructions of Politiano, confessedly the first scholar of the age, and the co-operation of sundry auxiliary tutors, whose reputation, particularly that of Bernardo da Bibbiena, has been undeservedly heightened by the biographer.

Let us, once for all, observe, that as we shall hereafter in our review of the literature of this work, have occasion to deliver our opinions concerning the judgment of Mr. R. on the subjects he has selected for praise, we shall confine ourselves in this instance to jejune annals: although in page 29 we cannot avoid quoting a blaze of metaphor, 'where *spectacles sowed* seeds of dissipation, which afterwards *met* with a more suitable climate in the fervid *atmosphere* of Rome.' Baron Munchausen's bean-seed might be said '*to meet the moon:*' but we have in no other instance heard of an embryo so aspiring.

Although Giovanni was nominally a cardinal, yet terms were entered into between the pope and his father, that he should not assume the insignia of his rank, or be received as member of the College of Cardinals, for the space of three years. This arrangement displeased Lorenzo; but during the time which it continued in force, Giovanni was compelled to pursue theological studies at Pisa. Lorenzo strove in vain to accelerate from the pope an enlargement of this probation. An intimacy was in these early years formed between Giovanni and his cousin Giulio, the natural son of Giuliano de' Medici, who had been assassinated in the conspiracy of the Pazzi. In this instance, as in most others where the opportunity can possibly present itself, Mr. R. refers the reader to his 'Life of Lorenzo.' We conceive this to be very unfair chicanery; and it strongly reminds us of the Göttingen professor, Heyne, who, (though he chokes us with his notes to his Homer and Virgil) is never easy unless he *refers* us to *what he has said* on Tibullus, Pindar, or Apollodorus; whereas each reference might very fairly supersede a correspondent portion of nonsense with which he degrades his pages. But however this may be allowable in a German, we should have hoped it would have been an obscurity avoided amongst the

Minimâ contentos *nocte* Britannos.

The investiture of Leo took place March 9, 1492. In page 35, an *interesting* biographical anecdote is related, 'that in his return to his residence, the rain still continued to pour

down in copious torrents, and as the luxurious convenience of a modern chariot was then unknown, the cardinal and his numerous attendants were almost overwhelmed in their peregrinations.' Gentle reader! attend! the cardinal (aged seventeen) was caught in the rain! but, most luckily, he did not catch cold.

With these '*authentic particulars*,' (ib.) we are dismissed from the view of our hero. There is in the first chapter much viciousness of style, and confusion of matter. Some ridiculous minutiæ, below the dignity of history, have already compromised the energy of character and observation: the notes are intrusive, and the appendix ponderous.

In the third chapter we are introduced to the baby cardinal again for a moment, and weep with him over the ashes of his father, who died April 8, 1492. The honours of the family were continued in the person of his brother Piero. Apprehensive, and as the event proved too justly, of the fickle disposition of his countrymen, Giovanni, however, returned to Florence; and Pope Innocent VIII. who died in the month of July in the same year, appointed him legate of the patrimony of St. Peter and the Tuscan state, to give him additional importance on this occasion. In the troubles which ensued on the irruption of Charles VIII. into Italy, Piero played the part of a traitor to his country: he delivered up its fortresses to the French, and returning to the city of Florence, was very naturally refused admittance within its walls. The Cardinals Piero and Giugliano with difficulty escaped from the exasperated populace, and fled to Bologna, where they were not cordially received. From thence Piero hastened to Venice, and Giovanni to Pitigliano. There the Vitelli hospitably entertained the holy fugitive. In 1497, the Medici made an unsuccessful atempt to re-enter Florence: their designs were speedily frustrated, and some of their adherents were accordingly executed. The character of Pope Alexander VI. is universally odious, and among those who incurred his hatred was our young cardinal; the character of the latter was, however, sufficiently supple to obviate the apparent fate which menaced him; and on his return to Rome from Genoa in 1500, an era which we now anticipate, he was received with open professions of esteem.

We proceed in the words of our author, premising that the disturbances of Italy had again compelled the cardinal to abandon it, not without fears for his personal safety.

'These portentous transactions were not regarded with an inattentive eye by the cardinal de' Medici. He had now attempted, in conjunction with his brothers, at three different times, to effect the

restoration of his family to their native place. The ill fortune or misconduct of Piero had defeated all their endeavours, and every new attempt had only served to increase the violence of their enemies, and to bar the gates of Florence more firmly against them. During five years he had been compelled to avail himself successively of the protection of the ancient friends of his family, in different parts of Italy: but as the hopes of his restoration to Florence diminished, he began to be regarded as an exile and a fugitive, and in the approaching disturbances of Italy, it was not easy to determine in what part he might find a secure asylum. The city of Rome, which ought to have afforded him a safe and honourable residence, was rendered irksome to him by the vices, and dangerous by the animosity of the pontiff; whilst the Florentines, in order to secure themselves during the approaching commotions, had acceded to the league with France, and thereby cut off from the Medici all hopes of deriving assistance from that power on which they had hitherto relied. Impelled by these circumstances, and perhaps also actuated by the laudable desire of visiting foreign countries, the cardinal determined to quit Italy, and to pass some portion of his time in traversing the principal kingdoms of Europe, till events might arise more favourable to his views.

This design he communicated to his cousin Giulio de' Medici, and it was agreed to form a party of twelve friends; a number which they considered sufficiently large for their mutual security in the common incidents of a journey, and too small to afford any cause of alarm. Discarding, therefore, the insignia of their rank, and equipping themselves in an uniform manner, they passed through the states of Venice, and visited most of the principal cities of Germany; assuming in turn the command of their troop, and partaking of all the amusements afforded by continual change of place, and the various manners of the inhabitants. On their arrival at Ulm, their singular appearance occasioned their being detained by the magistrates; but on their disclosing their quality and purpose, they were sent under a guard to the emperor Maximilian, who received the cardinal with that respect and attention, to which, from the celebrity of his ancestors, and his high rank in the church, he was so well entitled. Far from interrupting their progress, Maximilian highly commended the magnanimity of the cardinal in bearing his adverse fortune with patience; and his judgment and prudence, in applying to the purposes of useful information that portion of his time of which he could not now dispose to better advantage. Besides furnishing him with an honourable passport through the German states, Maximilian gave him letters to his son Philip, then governor of the Low Countries, recommending the cardinal and his companions to his protection and favour. After having passed a considerable time in Germany, the associated friends proceeded to Flanders: where they were received by Philip, not only with hospitality, but with magnificence. The cardinal then intended to have taken shipping, and proceeded to England; but the danger of the voyage deterred him

friends from the undertaking, and at their intreaties he relinquished his design. They, therefore, bent their course towards France. On their arrival at Rouen they were again seized upon, and detained in custody; and, although the cardinal, and his cousin Giulio, made an immediate discovery of their rank, and represented the object of their journey to be totally unconnected with political concerns; yet in the state of hostility that had then commenced between the kings of France and of Naples, there appeared to be too much ground for suspicion, to admit of their being speedily released; nor was it until letters were obtained from Piero de' Medici, then in the French camp at Milan, that they were enabled to procure their discharge. Having again obtained their liberty, they proceeded through France visiting every place deserving of notice, and examining whatever was remarkable, till they arrived at Marseilles; where after a short stay, they determined to proceed by sea immediately to Rome. The winds being, however, unfavourable, they were compelled to coast the Riviera of Genoa, where having been driven on shore, they thought it advisable to relinquish their voyage and to proceed by land to Savona. On their arrival at this place they met with the cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, who had fled thither to avoid the resentment of Alexander VI. A common enmity to that profligate pontiff, and a similarity of misfortunes, rendered their meeting interesting: and three refugees sat at the same table, all of whom were afterwards elevated to the highest dignity in the christian world. The two cousins of the Medici gave an account of the objects which they had met with on their journey; and related the difficulties which they had surmounted by land, and the dangers which they had encountered by sea. The cardinal della Rovere recapitulated in his turn, the events which had taken place in Italy since their departure, and in which they were so deeply interested. From Savona the cardinal de' Medici repaired to Genoa, where for some time he took up his residence with his sister, Madalena, the wife of Francesco Cibò, who had fixed upon that city as the place of his permanent abode.' VOL. i. P. 293.

The first volume, inasmuch as the hero is concerned, terminates with the Machiavellian attempt of Cæsar Borgia, to restore the authority of the Medici at Florence. The succinct account we have given of Giovanni, comprehends, we believe, all the scattered notices of that distinguished character to be collected in a quarto containing more than 450 pages.

In the year 1503, Pope Pius III. died, and the Cardinal de' Medici and two of his brethren were appointed by the college to receive the oath of fidelity from Monsignor Marco, the Bishop of Sinigaglia. In the same year died the unfortunate Piero de' Medici; yet after that event the fortunes of his family began to revive, for his widow was shortly allowed to return to Florence, and claim her rights of dower from the property of her husband. On this occasion the

crafty disposition of the cardinal appeared to some advantage; and conscious of his returning influence with the Florentines, he was not behind hand in shewing them that he had originally only *tolerated* a great portion of his brother's conduct, in respect to the ties of consanguinity.

We had before an opportunity of interesting our readers with an account of the cardinal when caught in the rain; we have now an additional pleasure in informing them that he duly sweated himself, to prevent his growing too fat, or to use Mr. R.'s *verbiage*, 'for preventing that corpulency to which he was naturally inclined.' *In tenui labor.* The only faults in the biographical account of Leo, of which we complain, are a disregard to the flagrant immoralities and low buffooneries of that prince—a weak sophism in argument—and an unnecessary dilation on trifling topics.

In the battle which proved fatal to the renowned Gaston de Foix, in 1512, the cardinal was taken prisoner. We expect, however, some better authority than that of Luc. Eremita in testimony to the *sole* charitable action which was ever recorded of the military prelate. In this suspicious account it is insinuated, and affirmed by Mr. Roscoe, that 'when the fate of the day was decided, he did not immediately attempt to quit the field, but devoted himself to the care of the dying. The '*maluit ab hostibus capi*,' of Luc. Eremita, would evidently infer a *possibility* of escape: now we have no reason to surmise such a *possibility*, nay the facts bear us out in assuming the utter impracticability of such an attempt. The fact is, this is one among the many traits of Italian flattery, in which Mr. R. has placed implicit confidence; and has thence frequently admitted into his text either details or conclusions of a similar nature.

After the fatal battle of Ravenna the cardinal was transported through Bologna and Milan on his road to France, but the confusion which prevailed among his guards suggested to him the practicability of an escape. Our limits will not permit us to place before the reader the descriptive passage which contains this narrative. In description Mr. R. succeeds, and we were much amused by his simple and ingenious method of telling the story. Shortly after this, the family of the Medici was re-established in Florence; and although their return was not signalized by any act of severity against the adverse party, yet the moderation of the cardinal in this respect was unable to prevent the effects of individual resentment. A dangerous conspiracy was formed, which however was discovered and prevented. Julius II. died February 21, 1513.

To those who have neither leisure nor desire to read the ecclesiastical history of Italy, in the ponderous tomes of many a sacred and anonymous historian, the succinct account of the mode of electing a pope, (c. x.) will not be unentertaining. The conclave elected the Cardinal de'Medici, who immediately assumed the appellation of Leo. X. Many historians concur in the ignoble motive which swayed the sacred college in their determination: decency forbids us to quote the text, but as the circumstance is important we shall convey the disagreeable truth in the words of Bayle: '*on pretend qu'il n'y eut rien qui contribuât davantage, à l'élever à la papauté, que les blessures qu'il avoit reçues dans les combats veneriens.*' The conclave thought he would not live long. But, to leave the subject for ever, we cannot conceive why Mr. R. quotes Jovius, while he disbelieves Bayle; for we aver that the Latin of the former is not incompatible with the French of the latter.

Having seated Leo in the pontifical chair, we shall briefly examine the character given him by Mr. Roscoe after his death, and take occasion from our utter dissent from that character, to illustrate the more prominent features which occurred during those times, which have owed more of their celebrity to external causes, than the immediate discernment and patronage of the degenerate son of Lorenzo. We shall hereafter have occasion to prove, that Mr. R. is childish to a surprizing degree in all his attempts to sum up characters. It would be a pleasing task, could we affirm, that he is only a weak historian in these points. We shall leave the reader to his own judgment, which must finally pronounce between the impartiality of Mr. R. and our critical justice.

'That the hand of nature has impressed on the external form and features, indications of the mind by which they are animated, is an opinion that has of late received considerable support, and which, under certain restrictions, may be admitted to be well founded. From the accounts which have been transmitted to us of the countenance and person of Leo X. and from the authentic portraits of him which yet remain, there is reason to believe, that his general appearance bespoke an uncommon character; and the skilful physiognomist might yet perhaps delight to trace, in the exquisite picture of him by Raffaello, the expressions of those propensities, qualities, and talents, by which he was more peculiarly distinguished. In stature he was much above the common standard. His person was well formed; his habit rather full than corpulent; but his limbs, although elegantly shaped, appeared somewhat too slender in proportion to his body. Although the size of his head, and the amplitude of his features, approached to an extreme, yet they exhibited a certain degree of dignity, which commanded respect. His com-

plexion was florid; his eyes were large, round, and prominent, even to a defect; insomuch, that he could not discern distant objects without the aid of a glass, by the assistance of which, it was observed, that in hunting and country sports, to which he was much addicted, he saw to a greater distance than any of his attendants. His hands were peculiarly white, and well formed, and he took great pleasure in decorating them with gems. His voice was remarkable for softness and flexibility, which enabled him to express his feelings with great effect. On serious and important occasions no one spoke with more gravity; on common concerns, with more facility; on jocular subjects, with more hilarity. From his early years he displayed a conciliating urbanity of manner, which seemed perfectly natural to him, but which was probably not less the effect of education than of disposition; no pains having been spared in impressing on his mind, the great advantage of those manners and accomplishments which soften animosity and attract esteem. On his first arrival at Rome, he soon obtained the favourable opinion of his fellow cardinals, by his uncommon mildness, good temper, and affability, which led him to oppose no one with violence, but rather to give way, when urged with any great degree of earnestness. With the old he could be serious, with the young, jocose; his visitors he entertained with great attention and kindness, frequently taking them by the hand, and addressing them in affectionate terms, and on some occasions embracing them, as the manners of the times allowed. Hence, all who knew him agreed, that he possessed the best possible dispositions, and believed themselves to be the objects of his particular friendship and regard; an opinion, which on his part, he endeavoured to promote, not only by the most sedulous and unremitting attention, but by frequent acts of generosity. Nor can it be doubted, that to his uniform perseverance in this conduct, he was chiefly indebted for the high dignity which he attained so early in life.' Vol. iv. p. 309.

The main object of Mr. Roscoe's work is the avowed panegyric of Leo. X. All who revere the name consecrated to their memories, by the traditions of early youth; all who have embraced speculative notions on the restoration of letters by the commanding genius and influence of a crowned individual; all who have attributed even the reformation in religion to the secret machinations of pontifical liberality, may fairly now exclaim,

Extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.

This studied panegyric has bared the vices, the inefficiency of the pontiff to public view—it was dangerous to disturb his ashes. We pledge ourselves that, if Mr. R.'s book be ever read, it will convey to the most impartial, a feeling little short of execration towards the hero.

The reputation of few who have figured in the page of history, has suffered more from the enmity of biographers, and the false attachment of the '*pessimum inimicorum genus, laudantes*,' than that of Leo. Mr. R. has kindly volunteered to examine and correct these incongruities. We too will make our inquiries, and establish the result of them, as far as the fallibility of Italian annals will permit our researches.

The passage quoted above will perhaps afford us more of merriment than serious disquisition. It relates, as the reader will see, more to the minutiæ of personal accomplishment, than to the discriminative elucidation of intellectual endowment, or political conduct. On the latter points we shall be compelled, for the sake of brevity, to exhibit the most apposite touches of Mr. Roscoe's and our own colouring, by the application of short remarks to short extracts. The absurdity of commencing the character of a great man by a reference to his physiognomy, dilated through many a drawling sentence, is sufficiently absurd. If the lines of character are deducible from the exterior of person, alas! poor Esop, we must e'en think thee the vilest of hypocrites. We must resign our sense and the noble axiom of *Fronti nulla fides*, and allow in its utmost extent, the indivisible union of beauty and virtue, deformity and vice.

'His person was well formed.' Notwithstanding this assertion, if the reader will take the pains to turn his eyes to the quotation we have produced, he will discover a catalogue of defects, which surely invalidate the position. In the name of folly, shall we not vent our disgust, when we are trifled with in the information, that 'his hands were peculiarly white?' The vulgar Paris de Grassis tells us, in his homely phrase, that 'in hot weather the pontiff sweated from top to toe:' the bluntness of his diary is more tolerable than the babyism of Mr. R.'s. remarks. The affable virtues attributed to Leo were the premeditations of crafty design, of studied hypocrisy. Not all the varnish with which Mr. R. has decked his portrait, can exclude from the penetration of the least fastidious, the real baseness, and subtle machinations of the original. The libel, the panegyric, each have their day; unconnected with the substantial basis of history, they crumble neglected into dust, while that fabric only occasionally uses those materials from the dilapidation, which may serve to strengthen or beautify itself. In the history before us, the truth of many ages has been elicited by that hand, which would fain stifle her deductions. The politics of Italy, dark, melancholy, dangerous, branded

with its due stigma the unfortunate family of Borgia. The same history, no longer pampered by Papal munificence, seduced by popularity, or warped by faction, has at least preserved for us those unfavourable traits in the dynasty of the Medici, the developement and illustration of which, it would seem, required only sense and impartiality in the compiler. The infractions of his treaty with Francis the First, would alone be sufficient to destroy the fame he might acquire on the plea of political sincerity.

The length of our article precludes us from enlarging farther at present upon these topics. We pledge ourselves in our ensuing number, to a fair and unbiassed examination of those points immediately connected with the subject before us. We have hitherto travelled through the most uninteresting province in the work: the province, however, which has been most assiduously cultivated by the hand of '*art.*' Compelled, as we shall be, to compress our disquisitions in a space much smaller than we could wish, we boldly avow the expectation that our remarks on the literature of the times, a subject on which Mr Roscoe has decidedly mistaken his talents, knowledge, and precision, will prove neither unentertaining nor uninstructive.

(To be continued.)

ART. V.—*Claims of Literature. The Origin, Motives, Objects, and Transactions of the Society for the Establishment of the Literary Fund.* Large 8vo. *pp.* 278. 7*s.* 6*d.* Miller. 1803.

IT may require an apology that the work before us has been so long unnoticed; and that apology might be derived from incidents and revolutions in our own state; for even courts of criticism are now subject to revolutions.

But we fell into the common error of the whole literary world, that the work entitled *Claims* of *Literature*, was an advertisement of the society for the Literary Fund, drawn out with the usual ability and address of the founder, into an eloquent and powerful appeal to the humanity and generosity of the public.

We also felt, we believe in common with the principal members of the republic of letters, a species of false shame, disinclining us from contributing to the diffusion of an opinion, that the votaries of literature were objects of charity. It is true, this error proceeded from a pre-conceived errror concerning the nature of the work, in which the word *charity* is scarcely to be found; and when found, it is in its genuine aad noblest sense.

The author (for the founder is here properly the author) pleads not in the style of a mendicant, but in the high tone of an advocate for injured merit; not for common *charity*, but for common *justice;* and he insists most ably on the necessity of extending the *law of equivalents* to all the useful productions of genius and literature.

An institution on such principles, which may be pronounced philosophic in the ancient and genuine sense of the word; by a man, unquestionably of extensive talents, but so careless of public opinion that he has suffered calumnies, domestic, political, and literary, to float around him for the third of a century, when a few sentences, perhaps a few monosyllables, might have dissipated them;* an institution under such circumstances for the relief of literary distress, at a time when literature and conspiracy were rendered nearly synonymous, is certainly a phenomenon even in an age of phenomena.

Complaints of the poverty of genius, and the misery of literary labourers, are probably as ancient as the Proverbs of Solomon; and projects to remove the dishonour and disgrace of them have been extremely numerous, but abortive.

It was reserved for a man of no influence, but what he derived from his own talents; of a singular and unpopular character, but radically and truly, we believe, a good man; patient from good temper; scarcely susceptible of private views; and of unyielding resolution and perseverance, when once determined on his measures—to furnish the first idea of a practicable plan for this purpose of exalted humanity; to develope that idea, gradually, under numerous disadvantages, and against numerous difficulties: and it seems probable from late occurrences, the patronage of the Prince of Wales, and the possession of a house for the society, that he will escape the common fate of most benevolent projectors; and will live to see completed all the noble views, with which he first formed the society for the Literary Fund.

Having thus, with the sentiments which should be felt by every man who wields a pen, paid our tribute of grateful

---

* We do not mean to write either satire or panegyric on the general character of David Williams; but to notice this peculiarity, as it affects his *public* undertakings. He sustained a heavy literary loss, by the dextrous management of revolutionary imputations on his journey to France in 1792. Several years afterwards, it appeared by the papers of Madame Roland, that his conduct had been honourable to himself and his country. We more than suspect that pamphlets have been attributed to him which he has not written. We mention these things as impediments to public views, which most men would endeavour to remove.

admiration, to the head that formed, and the heart that has nursed this noblest child of humanity, we will proceed to our duty as critics; in which we shall certainly have much to praise; and if we have somewhat to blame, it will be the blame of friends, who wish the institution to be, what perhaps it is impossible it should be, without blemish and without fault.

There is something uncommonly affecting in the general sympathy with which this institution is inspired towards its beneficiaries, manifested in a fundamental regulation, that no member or officer of the society shall disclose their names.

This, like most noble actions, requires sacrifices. The society cannot detail its transactions; and on its public days, it must not, as other societies may, exhibit the objects of its benevolence to stimulate the humanity that may furnish the means of their relief. This circumstance has not only retarded the accumulation of its funds, but rendered its annual account of the proceedings of the society less interesting, than must have been expected from the talents which were soon attracted into its offices and committees, by the excellence of its institutions.

In these circumstances, it was supposed a history of the society might be of great utility; and a committee was appointed to prepare it.

This committee consisted of Mr. William Boscawen, Mr. John Reeves, Mr. David Williams, Mr. Henry James Pye, Mr. William Thomas Fitz-Gerald, and Doctor Symmons.

We know not the deliberations and proceedings of this committee; but the first paper that appeared in consequence of them, promised a correspondence (including a history) between Mr. Reeves and Mr. Williams; but after some consideration it was abandoned, we have been informed, to the great regret of Mr. Williams, as he would unquestionably have used his utmost address to sanction the most liberal and extended application of the principles of the institution, with the loyalty and orthodoxy of Mr. Reeves's name.

It is very honourable to these gentlemen, that though supposed, and perhaps considering each other, hostile as politicians, they became friends the instant they met on the ground of exalted humanity, prepared by this excellent institution; and Mr. Reeves holds, with great honour to himself and with great utility to the society, one of its most important offices. The correspondence being abandoned (vide p. 2.) Mr. Williams, the founder, and the person best acquainted with the origin of the society, was appointed by the committee its historiographer; an office of some difficulty, as he might appear the hero of his own tale.

Mr. Williams avoids this difficulty with great address; for he renders the objections and obstacles to the first formation of the institution, questions of philosophy and policy, which he discusses without the least reference to himself.

The following is his plan:

'The history of the society, to be useful, should consist more of argument than narrative: for the difficulties which affected its origin, arose more from misapprehension and sophistry, than from any of the common obstacles to charitable institutions. On the first intimation of the design, it was asked.

'I. What is meant by literature, when proposed as the object of a charitable fund?

'II. The author of the first outline of the institution was charged with assuming what he should have proved, that the benefits of literature outweigh its evils; and it was alleged, if that opinion were proved, he would not be justified in promoting those evils, and increasing the number and misery of authors, by holding out encouragement to the choice of literary employments.

'III. The society was charged with indirect censure of the government of the country, though that government has liberally founded schools and universities, and supports learned and opulent establishments.

'IV. And, supposing the establishments of the country should not provide for all literary claimants, it was seriously and earnestly advised to leave them, as they have hitherto been left, to the discretion and patronage of the government, nobility, and opulent gentry; and not to undertake their relief by a literary fund.'

'These have been important obstacles to the progress of the undertaking; and if I state the considerations and reasons, which, by surmounting them, founded the society, I shall, in the most useful manner, write its history.' P. P. 7, 8, 9.

In the second section (P. 10) the author defines the expression LITERARY in the most enlarged sense,—

'Comprehending every species of mental exertion, which has been or can be communicated by language, writing, printing, or any arts analogous to them.'

In the third section; and in answer to the second objection, he maintains the utility of literature. This is a section displaying great ability, both as to matter and composition; yet it bears several strong marks of the author's characteristic indolence, and even of that negligence of public opinion, to which he has been more attentive in this than in any other of his publications.

He describes the nature and importance of genius, like a man who himself possesses it; but when he says, 'It takes place of virtue,' meaning, as appears afterwards, in extent of

glory and influence, he alarms the feeble, and furnishes, as he has done on former occasions, weapons for cavil and ill-nature.

He claims, and justly, the highest productive merit to genius, in opposition to Adam Smith; but why has he overlooked and spared his old friend Rousseau, whose discourse against the sciences and arts, is a standing libel on Mr. Williams' institution, and whose artifices of phraseology and style, might have been happily opposed by a great master in the same way?

In p. 30. he has the following paragraph:

'It is not my intention to write the history of literature, to which I do not feel competent. It would at this time, be a most interesting and important work. The action and counter-action of knowledge and ignorance, of literature and warfare, and the fluctuations of principles, morals, and manners, in consequence of them, from the night which followed Pliny, to the morning which arose with Bacon; from Epictetus to Montaigne, and from Plutarch to Locke, would be more useful, than any developement of cabinet intrigues, or any detail of military occurrences.'

This is nothing more than the apology of indolence, for the principal defect of this, otherwise most excellent pamphlet.

Such a history as he describes, including a satire on Rousseau, in his own manner, would have been a jewel in this work; and considering the apparent remaining vigour of Mr. Williams, who, we understand, has spent a long life principally in reading, and who joins facility to the arts of composition, we are surprized that the committee accepted the apology: and we hope it will find the means of inducing him to remove the deficiency for which he would only apologize, to perfect his own work, and materially serve the interest of his favorite institution.

Every man and every woman who have derived instruction, amusement, support, or consolation from books, should peruse attentively and repeatedly the fourth section of this work, 'On the Evils and Miseries of Literature.'

On the subject of *patronage*, in the 5th section, and in answer to the fourth objection, the author, we think, indulges his disposition to satire. He must have reasons unknown to us, but which he certainly should have intimated, to deny the merit of patronage to the government, (except in the solitary instance of Herschell) to the nobility, to the church, and to the law.

Can Mr. Williams have been eighteen years in so advantageous a situation for this species of knowledge, as that of

one of the most active conductors of the Literary Fund, and be ignorant of numerous instances of patronage, even in his own sense of the word?

We remember Mr. W. among the frequent visitors at Lansdowne House. What does he denominate the salary and entertainment of Dr. Priestley, and after his departure from the house, the continuance of that salary to the Doctor's death?

It cannot be unknown to Mr. W. that the Duke of Norfolk has printed the whole edition of Mr. Thomas Taylor's translation of Plato, at the expence of a thousand perhaps fifteen hundred pounds: trusting for his reimbursement (which he could not have expected) to the sale of the copy?

What would Mr. W. call the conduct of the Prince of Wales, towards the Society for the Literary Fund? He has emphatically pronounced it patronage; for we have no doubt he was active, if he was not the proposer, in the election of his royal highness, as its patron. Who advised the prince to this measure; one of the wisest and most honourable of his royal highness's life? Was it not the Earl of Chichester? Has not Mr. W. himself at public meetings of the society, proposed his lordship's health, as that of its most disinterested and best friend? And will he refuse to Lord Chichester the appellation of patron? We are sure he will not, unless in his own storehouse of happy expressions, he can find out any that will convey a higher and better opinion of his lordship. We think, therefore, the author should recompose the section on Patronage; not enter the lists with Mr. Horne Tooke, for the palm of indiscriminate asperity; but consult his own natural disposition, and touch his pictures of the times with pleasing lights, as well as dark and deep shadows. He will in that manner, more speedily than by arguments, remove objections to his views, and promote the prosperity of the institution.

The difficulties attending the formation of the society, embarrassed the founder principally from the year 1787 to 1790, when he was first enabled to produce it to the public. Having disposed of those difficulties, he commences its actual history in the sixth section.

It appears (P. 102), that his first attempt was to form associations of literati and artists, in the manner of the friendly clubs, who should, by their own subscriptions, provide for future misfortune, old age, &c. He assigns reasons for the failure of this attempt. We think, however, such associations, accredited and encouraged by the present society, might be very usefully established; and we wish the

benevolent author would promote them. The advertisement by which the public attention was roused to this most interesting subject, we shall copy, from a sort of grateful respect.

'*Literary Fund.*

'The humanity of the public has been directed, by numerous examples, to distressed talents in several pursuits; but men of letters, whose studies often preclude all pecuniary attention, suffer in poverty, and sometimes die in want.

A small number of gentlemen, in whose knowledge affecting instances of this nature lately occurred, have formed the outlines of an institution to relieve and support genius and learning in sickness, age, and at the termination of life; and to preserve from distress the widows and orphans of those who have any claims on the public, from literary industry and merit. The constitutions of the society are printed, and sold for the benefit of the fund, by L. Davis, bookseller to the Royal Society, opposite Gray's Inn,' &c. &c.

The whole of this section is replete with the most affecting truths, happily expressed; and his conclusion, which will unquestionably draw on him the blessing of every real friend of genius and learning, is worthy of any writer, and of any man.

'For me, if by argument, attention, and assiduity I could essentially contribute to the permanent establishment of a large and regulated society, acting uniformly and impartially on the principle of benevolence, which has hitherto directed the Literary Fund; if I could see the society sufficiently powerful to sustain above indigence all unfortunate men of great talents and genius, the most valuable acquisitions of society, and to influence and improve the general condition of eminent and useful literature; if my wishes were, in any considerable degree, realized by means of this institution, to convert literary misery, which is now, and which must ever be, the source of discontent, faction, and revolutionary enterprize, into a spirit of public health and national improvement; if I could hope, that in some future time, the truths exemplified by this society, might induce an enlightened legislature to form a LITERARY JURISPRUDENCE to allot to GENIUS, in all its exertions, an equitable portion, present and eventual, of the effects of those exertions, I should think, in proportion to my attention to its proceedings, I had rendered my country the most important service:

'I'd weigh it as the action of my life
That must give name and value to the whole.' P. 125.

It remains to say that this work is throughout written with great force, as well as great purity and elegance of language;

in many passages commandingly energetic, rising into a bold and manly eloquence.

Several of the opinions and positions advanced in it, however, appear to us of a very questionable nature: and to some of them (if we understand them) we must refuse our assent. The speculations on public and charity schools contain profound truths, but are not given sufficiently in detail to afford any substantial benefit; and the observations (p. 58, et seq.) on the universities, are of a similar character. At p. 117, a strong and perhaps hyperbolic passage presents itself, to which we are unwilling to accede. 'Ancient literature, to the beauties and excellencies of which we can scarcely be said to be approaching,' &c. Attached as we certainly are by education and early impression to the works of the ancients, we cannot easily be induced to award so penurious a meed of applause to modern writers; and Mr. W.'s own performance may be cited in support of our sentiments.

We must also be allowed, as reviewers, to shrink from the sarcastic censure of 'seeking consolation in the vanity of passing illiberal judgments on others in secret tribunals;' such consolation *we* beg leave to disclaim: and must likewise express our hope and conviction that the public will not rank *us* with 'those whose perpetual cavil and disguised calumnies deprave the public taste, and infest conversation and social life with an insatiable spirit of censure and detraction.'

Having already noticed what we consider to be the greatest defect in this work, we must now observe, that to general readers the effect and interest of the composition is much lessened by a compression of style, that renders many passages doubtful, and some (to common understandings) in a great measure unintelligible.

The author, with a mind evidently long accustomed to philosophic inquiries, and writing upon subjects that had long engaged no small portion of his attention, seems to have been unconscious that the greater part of his readers might not be able to draw upon stores of reasoning and deduction equally ample with those he himself possessed.

He should have recollected, that the abstruse and difficult subjects touched upon in this work could answer no useful purpose, if they were not sufficiently dilated to ensure a general comprehension. Philosophic principles hinted at, rather than stated, and unaided by sufficient illustration and example, have, we doubt not, by inducing misconception and error, much lessened the utility of this production. From that which is not accurately understood, the judgment cannot be convinced; and consequences contrary to the intention of the author, may be drawn by the cavil of envy

and the rapid glance of prejudice, from his strong language, obscure from its terseness, and admitting of perversion from want of amplification.

Mr. W. may perhaps think with Dr. Johnson, that 'it is the business of an author to provide his reader words, and not understanding;' but we must ever consider that the first duty of every one who undertakes to inform or to interest the public, is to convey his meaning clearly and fully; he may then take place in the ranks of literature according to the ability he possesses of adorning the ideas of genius with the impression of energetic, and the grace of elegant expression.

The constitutions of the society have long spoken their own praise. They bear the usual stamp of the productions of real genius, great simplicity of matter and expression.

The auxiliary papers are,

I. Remarks, by Mr. William Boscawen, on the cases in which relief has been administered from the Literary Fund.

This is written in the moderate style of an apologist; but it convinces us that no particular account can be given to the public of the transactions of the society, without violating its fundamental law of secrecy.

It will be one of the great advantages of its house, that its records may be arranged for private inspection.

II. Poetical Contributions.

Though other societies have had recitations, they are not understood to be, as in this society, regulated parts of the annual festivals. And yet every writer seems to act wholly from himself, and to be completely answerable for his particular contribution, the committee of management, as we understand, only ascertaining the composition to be worthy of recitation. There is much wisdom in such latitude, as indeed there seems to be in all the regulations of this society.

The elder Captain Morris and Mr. Dyer insinuate claims from the rights of man: by the poet laureat, by Mr. Boscawen, by Mr. Deputy Birch, and particularly by Mr. Fitz-Gerald, the same claims are blended with the warmest effusions of loyalty, orthodoxy, and antigallicanism. This at once destroys the first and principal instrument of envious detraction, 'that the founder had republican views;' and it exhibits a beautiful effect of real humanity in engaging men of all opinions to plead its cause.

Dr. Symmons, with more propriety, but perhaps with less effect, avoids all excursions from the subject. His ode,

though a little too laboured and didactic, has several passages of genuine poetic merit, and does great honor to his head and heart.

The verses of Mr. Deputy Birch are also too didactic, and enter too much into detail; but they have some passages which are pathetic and even beautiful.

Mr. Pye, the laureat, shines in the department of humanity with more lustre than in his periodical panegyrics. We wish, however, that in his poetic compositions, he would forget his Greek.

Mr. William Boscawen, whose poems all taste of classic springs, seldom uses what the vulgar call *hard words*. His verses are harmonious; and he is generally happy in the beauty of his exordium. For instance:

1. 1.

'Hence, base inglorious passions! Hence
The thirst of gain, the lust of power!
To thee, divine Benevolence,
We consecrate the social hour!
And while the circling glass imparts
New fire to melt obdurate hearts,
Bid sympathy, by taste refin'd,
Expand and purify the mind;
Bid her attend the thrilling strains,
When genius speaks its heartfelt pains,
And waft them to the sacred shrine,
By liberal pity rear'd, and cherish'd by the nine!

1. 2.

'Hark! 'tis the muse's well-known voice;
Heard ye the glad triumphant song?
She bids her gentle choir rejoice,
And thus with rapture fires the throng:
Rise ye who claim my guardian care,
Rise from the slumber of despair!
To dry your tears, to chase your woes,
With new born zeal Britannia glows;
At length her generous sons proclaim,
That "want no more attends on fame;"
At length a dawn of happier days
Beams on your rising hope, and animates your lays.' P. 184, 185.

We have reserved for our conclusion, the most powerful poetic pleader at the anniversaries of this institution, Mr. Fitz-Gerald. His verses, though not always correct, are animated, strong, and epigrammatic; and his recitation multiplies their force. In the introduction of loyal sentiments, he is always among the foremost: and at every

meeting we have attended, he has been called upon more than once: particularly for an *address*, in which he happily contrasts the *liberties* of England and France.

He has also succeeded in the most difficult of all poetic tasks, that of panegyric. His lines respecting Mr. Williams, as the founder, are free from all the common objections to panegyrics. They are strictly within the limits of truth, and yet they are highly poetical: they have all the beauty of Mr. Gibbon's compliment to Lord North, with the addition of an easy and happy versification.

> 'When time has swept the present race away,
> And friends to science celebrate this day;
> Remembrance shall, with more than pleasure, name
> And give your liberal patronage to fame—
> To rival genius—mutual envy past—
> Succeeding ages shall be just at last:
> And he who first this noble fabric rais'd,
> Shall, with no common gratitude, be prais'd:
> Time, that destroys the hero's trophied bust,
> Shall spare the bay that blossoms o'er his dust.' P. 219.

On the whole, we rank the Claims of Literature among the most important works which have lately appeared. It has, as we have before insinuated, the general fault of being too compressed, and calculated for the higher and not the common classes of readers. It has, however, not only our approbation, but it is our ardent wish and hope, that the benevolent authors may see all their views realised, and all their pains and anxieties compensated; that the heir of the British throne may consider his patronage of the Society for the Literary Fund, as the central feather of his princely honours; and that his royal highness may, as he can, extend its utility and influence throughout the whole of the British isles.

ART. VI.—*The Christian System unfolded, in a Course of practical Essays on the principal Doctrines and Duties of Christianity. By Thomas Robinson, M. A. Vicar of St. Mary's, Leicester.* 2 *Vols.* 8*vo.* 1*l.* 4*s.* Rivingtons. 1805.

THE zeal of those who have engaged in the defence of the genuine doctrines of the gospel, has exerted itself in a variety of ways for the support and extension of the christian system. Their ardor founded on conviction, and

strengthened by experience, has produced corresponding results. They have furnished a cloud of testimony evidencing their own diligence, and directed to the establishment of others in the faith. Some have vindicated the principles of evangelical truth, others have enforced the duties to which these principles give birth. A third and a most useful class, have asserted the necessary connection between the former and the latter; between christian doctrines and christian practice, in opposition to the attempts of those who endeavour to reduce the gospel to a system of mere morality, and at the same time studiously remove the only motives upon which the practice of morality is successfully inculcated. Publications have appeared in every variety of for mand style, of title and distribution, that can adapt them to the tempers, and pursuits of different persons, or meet the multiplied diversity of errors in principle and practice. There is scarcely any mode of human frailty or perverseness, that has not been maturely considered by those who profess the art of ministering to a mind diseased, and its appropriate, and scriptural remedy distinctly pointed out. The ignorant are instructed, the stubborn are admonished, the dejected are consoled. The humble and self-denying exertions of many divines in the study and in the pulpit, are not discouraged by the task of adapting their expressions to the meanest capacity, and enable us, we hope, to state that in this country more than in any other of equal territory and population, the poor have the gospel preached to them. But this is a subject respecting which more than any other, we may say, 'nil actum—si quid superesset agendum.' Still there are many persons, who require additional information upon their most important concerns, and an invigorated attention to their religious interests. The various arts, which ingenious self-love employs to hide men from themselves, call for a diversified application of the means of counteraction. A display of the standard of truth does in reality what is attributed in romance to the fabulous shield and ring; it dissipates the illusions of self-complacence; and shews without disguise, the true state of our disagreement from the word of God.—A hasty view will be sufficient to convince us that no reason at present exists for the suspension of religious instruction by a removal of the want of it. And under this impression we are happy to congratulate the public on an addition to the opportunities already afforded of applying the doctrines of scripture to the improvement of individual christians. So long as human nature betrays a propensity to error, both in speculation and in conduct, the number of religious publi-

cations already in print, seems no just ground of objection to their further increase. If error be continually and industriously infused into the mind, it must be continually obviated by fresh antidotes, and corresponding perseverance. Even supposing the objectionable works removed, the number and variety of those which remain certainly amounts to no more than what the difference of temper, education, age, and taste render necessary, and the multitudes of those, who stand in need of religious instruction, imperiously demand. If St. Paul became all things to all men, that he might by all means gain some, much more is it incumbent upon each particular author, to study to recommend that part of the subject which has hitherto not received its due share of attention, or to illustrate what has yet been but inadequately explained. Nor will it be any reasonable ground of objection to Mr. Robinson's submitting his production to the public eye, that much of the substance of his publication is to be found in other authors. The unity of subject in theology forbids the expectation of new matter; and if a new arrangement be an inducement with some to listen to instruction, sufficient motive is afforded to furnish them with the means of acquiring it. If the eloquence of the pulpit has sometimes made 'those who came to scoff remain to pray,' the desire of novelty and the hope of acquiring information critically, may lead some at least to the perusal of what will afterwards detain them by a stronger attraction, and reward them with more solid advantage. Whatever has yet been done by separate tracts, or more systematic and laboured productions, there still seemed room for a work, which, partaking of the nature of both these kinds of writing, should possess beside, peculiar advantages not to be found in either; a work that should present in an orderly series of distinct parts, the fundamental truths of our holy religion, with a short pertinent application under each head, of the revealed point which it proposes to our belief. Two obvious advantages result from this method. A systematic and comprehensive body of theological instruction is afforded to those who would be afraid or unable to encounter the ponderous and learned volumes to which a methodical arrangement is generally confined. In the reflections which are subjoined, we find the advantages of the smaller practical treatise, correcting the propensity of the mind to rest in speculative notions; and facilitating the remembrance of each precept, by its connection with a doctrine occurring in an orderly series. Much time must have been employed and much pains exerted by Mr. Robinson, and we think with considerable

strengthened by experience, has produced corresponding results. They have furnished a cloud of testimony evidencing their own diligence, and directed to the establishment of others in the faith. Some have vindicated the principles of evangelical truth, others have enforced the duties to which these principles give birth. A third and a most useful class, have asserted the necessary connection between the former and the latter; between christian doctrines and christian practice, in opposition to the attempts of those who endeavour to reduce the gospel to a system of mere morality, and at the same time studiously remove the only motives upon which the practice of morality is successfully inculcated. Publications have appeared in every variety of for mand style, of title and distribution, that can adapt them to the tempers, and pursuits of different persons, or meet the multiplied diversity of errors in principle and practice. There is scarcely any mode of human frailty or perverseness, that has not been maturely considered by those who profess the art of ministering to a mind diseased, and its appropriate, and scriptural remedy distinctly pointed out. The ignorant are instructed, the stubborn are admonished, the dejected are consoled. The humble and self-denying exertions of many divines in the study and in the pulpit, are not discouraged by the task of adapting their expressions to the meanest capacity, and enable us, we hope, to state that in this country more than in any other of equal territory and population, the poor have the gospel preached to them. But this is a subject respecting which more than any other, we may say, 'nil actum—si quid superesset agendum.' Still there are many persons, who require additional information upon their most important concerns, and an invigorated attention to their religious interests. The various arts, which ingenious self-love employs to hide men from themselves, call for a diversified application of the means of counteraction. A display of the standard of truth does in reality what is attributed in romance to the fabulous shield and ring; it dissipates the illusions of self-complacence; and shews without disguise, the true state of our disagreement from the word of God.—A hasty view will be sufficient to convince us that no reason at present exists for the suspension of religious instruction by a removal of the want of it. And under this impression we are happy to congratulate the public on an addition to the opportunities already afforded of applying the doctrines of scripture to the improvement of individual christians. So long as human nature betrays a propensity to error, both in speculation and in conduct, the number of religious publi-

cations already in print, seems no just ground of objection to their further increase. If error be continually and industriously infused into the mind, it must be continually obviated by fresh antidotes, and corresponding perseverance. Even supposing the objectionable works removed, the number and variety of those which remain certainly amounts to no more than what the difference of temper, education, age, and taste render necessary, and the multitudes of those, who stand in need of religious instruction, imperiously demand. If St. Paul became all things to all men, that he might by all means gain some, much more is it incumbent upon each particular author, to study to recommend that part of the subject which has hitherto not received its due share of attention, or to illustrate what has yet been but inadequately explained. Nor will it be any reasonable ground of objection to Mr. Robinson's submitting his production to the public eye, that much of the substance of his publication is to be found in other authors. The unity of subject in theology forbids the expectation of new matter; and if a new arrangement be an inducement with some to listen to instruction, sufficient motive is afforded to furnish them with the means of acquiring it. If the eloquence of the pulpit has sometimes made 'those who came to scoff remain to pray,' the desire of novelty and the hope of acquiring information critically, may lead some at least to the perusal of what will afterwards detain them by a stronger attraction, and reward them with more solid advantage. Whatever has yet been done by separate tracts, or more systematic and laboured productions, there still seemed room for a work, which, partaking of the nature of both these kinds of writing, should possess beside, peculiar advantages not to be found in either; a work that should present in an orderly series of distinct parts, the fundamental truths of our holy religion, with a short pertinent application under each head, of the revealed point which it proposes to our belief. Two obvious advantages result from this method. A systematic and comprehensive body of theological instruction is afforded to those who would be afraid or unable to encounter the ponderous and learned volumes to which a methodical arrangement is generally confined. In the reflections which are subjoined, we find the advantages of the smaller practical treatise, correcting the propensity of the mind to rest in speculative notions; and facilitating the remembrance of each precept, by its connection with a doctrine occurring in an orderly series. Much time must have been employed and much pains exerted by Mr. Robinson, and we think with considerable

success, in forming the plan of the present publication, with a view to exhibit each division of his subject in a clear light, to demonstrate the existence of the respective doctrines by a collation of texts, and to pursue them to their consequences. His title to praise is the more firmly established from the evidence which his book affords of the personal labour exerted by its author. However the general features of many parts of the work resemble the writings of other authors upon the same subject, the whole seems to have been new moulded by his own hand. The manner of conducting his arguments shews that if he has sometimes been obliged nearly to coincide with the expressions of those who entertained the same views of the subject, he has not adopted their sentiments, without an independent exertion of his own judgment, in ascertaining the truth of their opinions. To execute such a plan with spirit and yet with equability, so as to preserve the connexion requisite to form a complete whole, and support at the same time the interest of each particular part, is no easy task. The rough draft indeed of such a plan is so obvious, that few persons who have not attentively considered it can estimate the pains necessary, even to the mere division and distribution of the parts. But the labour, time, unremitted attention, and repeated revisal requisite to furnish the statement, discussion, illustration, and application of each particular part, cannot easily be computed but by the author. A constant and attentive study of scripture joined to a judicious selection, and discrimination of heads, for arranging the variety of matter thus obtained, furnishes but the first principles of such a work. The subject of each head is again to be analyzed, and expanded separately; the reasoning is to be supported by such texts of scripture, as bear with the most direct particularity upon the matter under consideration. In the practical application, a fresh difficulty arises from the necessity of adhering to that narrow path, a deviation from which is the encouragement of error. If in considering any one duty by itself, its relation to the whole, and its bearing upon other obligations, be forgotten, a dangerous opening is made for the introduction of fatal mistakes; a temptation too seducing is held out to those who are previously inclined to limit themselves to a partial and defective obedience.

Of systematic arrangement the most natural fault is to run too much into general speculation, and to be sparing of circumstantial application and practical deduction. On the other hand, in treatises strictly practical, the conduct inculcated is not always distinctly supported by the motives appropriate

to it. To combine the advantages of a satisfactory investigation of principles, with a happy mode of exhortation to bring them into action, requires the assistance of much subordinate and collateral reading, in addition to the more direct study of divinity. But more is necessary than can be produced by study and retirement. Experience alone can place in a clear point of view the obstacles to the conveyance of instruction, and the means of removing them. Few are easily aware of the extent in which these difficulties exist; much less are they prepared but by persevering and often by painful reflection to meet and encounter them with success. A diligent discharge of the duties of the pastoral office, during a long series of years, furnishes the only adequate probation for this purpose. Of such a course of life, we are led by the preface to conclude, that the volumes before us are the result: And it is in this view, that we are enabled to trace the connexion between cause and effect in the success attending the performance.

The employment of a clergyman actively engaged in the discharge of his duty, affords the most extensive opportunities for an enlarged and accurate acquaintance with the human character. This position will be reluctantly admitted by those who have adopted the higher and more active departments of secular pursuit; and who claim a knowledge of mankind as almost their peculiar praise. It will be readily admitted that they meet with a greater number of individual subjects for observation in their constant and complicated intercourse with the world. Whether greater varieties of character are brought within their notice, may be fairly questioned: and it is certain that they cannot possess the same opportunities for deliberate and repeated observation. The interference of different interests forbids mankind in general to see each other as they really are. And the caution which this introduces between man and man is certainly not diminished when they are brought together by concerns of business, of politics, or even of pleasure. But what conversations are attended with so little reserve as those between a benevolent minister and his parishioners? His is surely the liberty above others of analyzing character in the last recesses of the heart: and, if to a solid and sincere piety, he joins a sagacious and reflecting mind, this opportunity will be improved to the most beneficial and exalted purposes. To a man aware of the importance of the sacred profession, and eager to promote the interests of religion, the study of the human mind will be a most attractive pursuit, as it furnishes data for the science of instruction: and thus considered

it may sustain a comparison with the most inviting departments of oxperimental philosophy. It calls for an equal exertion, and creates an interest as much superior as the ends it has in view. Every action, every word of each individual, becomes a subject for reflection, and is treasured up in the memory to be applied to future purposes. Satisfaction repeatedly given to those who are in doubt and distress, supplies an habitual dexterity in the solution of difficulties. An intuitive sagacity in removing objections to the truth, and detecting the closest delusions of the heart, is thus acquired, and observation continued and extended,

> 'Till old experience do attain
> To something of prophetic strain.'

When this faculty is exerted in the province of an author, the reader is surprized to find that remarks expressed in general terms apply with a personal particularity to himself. The objections he has been accustomed to make are considered and obviated; the latent unsoundness of his moral conduct discovered and reproved.

With such views, and a mature advancement in such necessary requisites, Mr. R. seems to have commenced his undertaking, and the important purpose with which he sets out, he keeps constantly in view. The method, in itself judicious and correct, is but a subordinate excellence. It has a happy effect in exhibiting the connection of the great truths of religion with each other, and thereby adding to the conviction of their certainty and importance; but its influence is not confined to the production of this effect. The adherence to arrangement is evidently dictated by the desire of giving a greater practical energy to the principles which it comprises and displays. We remark in Mr. R. none of the prevalent fondness for exhibiting the result of much industry, where little has in reality been employed: no resemblance to those writers who vaguely advert to the scripture doctrines, and filling up the intervals with their own crude fancies, call the congeries a system of divinity. The least fault of such men, is the exposure of themselves. They mislead the incautious, aggravate unnecessary differences of opinion, and pervert the minds of those who are led by inclination, or compelled by want of time, to take their opinions upon trust.

The object to which Mr. R.'s plan is directed, and the outline of which is given in the introduction, is to lay before the reader in a regular series of essays, the circumstances connected with man's salvation. These will of course

be such as introduce, and render necessary the scheme of redemption; the actual undertaking, and accomplishment of it; its consequences, and ultimate purposes. The divine Origin of the Scriptures as the obvious Preliminary and Foundation of the Christian System, forms the subject of the first essay; and their claim to our implicit belief being established, we are led to a consideration of their contents. Our attention is first directed to the Deity, his Character, and Attributes; the Creation, and the Fall of Man, with its various deplorable Consequences; the divine Plan of reconciling Man to his offended Maker; the Character and Offices of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is pointed out as the Divine Agent in the Conversion of Sinners. The effects of this agency are instanced in the production and confirmation of the various parts of the christian character, Repentance, Faith, Sanctification, &c. The rule of our duty is laid down as contained in the ten commandments, which are successively commented upon. An Essay on Prayer is followed by an Explanation of the several Parts of the Lord's Prayer. Considerations on Public Worship and the Sacraments; on the general Resurrection, and the Happiness of Heaven, conclude the whole. The subject matter of the respective essays is given in a very copious table of contents in the first volume, which may be of use to afford a general view of the work preparatory to reading it, and to digest the information that has been obtained by the perusal. To each volume is beside prefixed the titles of the essays it contains, which afford considerable insight into the mode of conducting the design, and from which, it appears, that the method adopted naturally arises out of the subject. Events are here preceded by the occasions which produced them. The scheme of salvation is deduced from a description of the divine agents, engaged in contriving, and accomplishing it. The various attributes of the deity previously considered, lead to the display of their combined energy in human redemption. The sanctification, and obedience of man on earth is followed by the concluding views of a future existence, and the eternal happiness which it is to introduce.

Mr. R.'s style is strong and clear, but he is so unambitious of ornament, as occasionally to degenerate into some degree of carelessness. In a few instances the insertion of the texts is rather abrupt and disjointed, so that the support they afford to the preceding argument, is not immediately and distinctly perceived. The arrangement is in general very good, the statement of the doctrines clear,

the inferences just, and the application natural and important. The execution is so equable throughout, that it is not very easy to select any passages which have a superior claim to attention, or which will operate as more recommendatory specimens than the rest. But if we propose as a criterion of the merit of the work, an extract incidentally taken, though the author appear to lose the advantage of studious selection, an accurate ground of judgment is afforded, and a character of the work which will not disappoint expectation. With the exception of a few passages, which we shall afterwards notice, we can point out scarcely a single essay, which does not afford proofs of information and diligence, successfully exerted in vindicating and recommending the christian system. The nature of this work is calculated rather to quiet the remaining doubts and difficulties of a mind already well disposed to the truths of revelation; and to persuade those who acknowledge the authority of the divine precepts, to the practice of their duty, than to answer the cavils of objectors, or to disentangle sceptical perplexities. It supposes in those to whom it is addressed, a general disposition to be instructed; the writer disclaims the character of a disputant, or controversialist, and professes it his sole object to promote the purposes of christian faith and holiness. One unquestionable advantage which it possesses, is the having brought together the principal topics of christianity, in a systematic form; so that a connected view may be gained of the whole subject, and reference made to a larger or more argumentative treatise, upon any single topic, respecting which the reader may desire further information. Every part of the subject, though not treated in an argumentative style, is distinctly considered and clearly stated. Faith and obedience, by the partial, inadequate, or confused consideration of which some theological systems are disgraced, are here unfolded, each distinctly in itself without excluding the other; each claims its appropriate influence, and office; and without being undistinguishably confused, they are harmoniously combined. Mr. R.'s ideas of the christian character, appear to us to be in conformity with the established criteria of our church. It is evidently his design to inculcate the union of scriptural faith with scriptural obedience: Nor will any man square with his estimate of christian perfection, who does not rely for favour in the sight of God, upon the unqualified merits of Jesus Christ: and who does not accompany this reliance, by that unreserved obedience to all the commands of God, which, where it is genuine, it will always produce.

The first essay opens with some general Reflections on the Sacred Writings, and the peculiar arrangement which obtains in them, totally different from the regularity of method usually adopted by other authors. Obvious reasons are given for the advantages to be derived from occasionally considering the series of doctrines and duties in a systematic order.

The consideration of the apparently hopeless state of man, after the fall, and the admirable fitness of the plan of redemption to display the various and infinite perfections of God, (P. 46) is rational and pious. But of the evidences adduced of the holiness of the divinity, one is offered, which does not appear to us to apply to the subject, or afford strength to the conclusion:

'That God is holy, we might collect from his nature, as he is a self-existent spirit, possessed of unlimited power and understanding. He must be entirely removed from all those ignorances, infirmities, and temptations, by which we, or any of his creatures, may be deceived, allured, and overcome. By his knowledge, he must discern things exactly as they are; and in consequence of his omnipotence, being perfectly independent, he can have nothing either to hope or to fear. It follows, therefore, that "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.' P. 78.

The self-existence, unlimited powers, and perfect wisdom of God, are certain assurances to us that he must be free from every influence of fear, infirmity, or temptation. But the holiness of the divinity is no more a necessary inference from these, than are any other of his attributes. This argument proves only that he is exempt from those occasions of evil, to which creatures are subject. That holiness is inseparable from the divine nature, we consider as an intuitive truth which receives no additional support from this statement. The reflection belongs indeed more properly to the consideration of the veracity of God where it is again introduced.

At P. 110, we meet with this sentence: 'The angels sing, "Glory to God in the highest," because there is "peace on earth, and good will towards men;" and we have extracted it for expressing our dislike in general of that sort of interpolated citation. In the instance before us the collateral import of the sentence as it stands, after the insertion, is not materially altered from its original meaning as it is found in scripture: they are closely connected, and in substance one is fairly deducible from the other. But we object to the practice; for every text has several different aspects in which it may be placed by such a process, and which, without materially altering the principal idea, may, and we apprehend often

do operate unfavourably upon the doctrines, in support of which they are adduced.

The consequences of the fall of man in vitiating and enfeebling the faculties and affections of the mind are considered at large. The effects of this moral obliquity in human nature are placed in a forcible light at P. 209, where notice is taken of

'The general want of honesty among men in their transactions with each other. The facts are so glaring, and the inference so undeniable, that it seems sufficient barely to mention the case. The world is full of fraud and robbery, which could have no place, if men were upright creatures. What do our prisons, our courts of justice, and almost all commercial dealings exhibit, but proofs of sad knavery, and of an universal disposition to overreach and oppress by the basest tricks, if not by force and violence? Why must our persons and property be constantly defended by armour, by bars and bolts? Whence is it, that "sin sticketh close between buying and selling?" Why must such precautions be used in every bargain, that the man, who places implicit confidence in another, and guards not against deceit with suspicious vigilance, as if every one were a rogue, is condemned and laughed at for his total ignorance of the world? This want of confidence implies a general conviction that there is no sound principle of probity and veracity in the world. And while we perceive this universal failure in one of the plainest duties of morality, among all ranks, and in all the nations of the world, shall we hesitate to draw the conclusion, that men are not affected towards each other, as they would be in a state of uncorrupted purity?'

The active nature of this principle possesses a strong claim upon the attention of all who are engaged in the education of children: and the representation which the writer gives of it, is calculated to stimulate them to invigorated exertions, and to encourage their perseverance in that anxious and often painful duty.

'This doctrine claims the peculiar attention of parents, with a reference to the education of their children. How important is your trust, to whom is committed the instilling of right principles into young and unfurnished minds! Beware that you do not cherish in them any ideas of their own natural goodness or sufficiency. Flatter them not, that they are uncorrupted, and as free from moral stains, as the pure white paper is from blots; but rather apprize them, that they will find religion to be an arduous business, chiefly from the disordered state of their own affections, and that they will have occasion for incessant prayer, vigilance, and humiliation, because "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." O warn them of their evil propensities, and unruly passions;

and guard them especially against pride and selfishness, folly and sensuality.

'In your great solicitude also for their progress and establishment in truth and righteousness, be not surprised that you meet with many obstructions. From the universal depravity of nature it must follow, that they will never grow up to be wise, virtuous, and holy, without continual instruction, and the painful discipline of correction. You must not, therefore, be discouraged, though your efforts for a long time seem to fail. Against many unpromising appearances renew your charitable endeavours, imploring and expecting success from divine grace alone. But how inexcusable will you be, if you leave them to themselves, to gratify the vile affections of their hearts without controul! And how perfectly inconsistent will be your conduct, if, while you profess to believe the doctrine of human depravity, you expose them to temptations, as if there were no evil tendencies in their nature!' P. 225.

From the consideration of the depravity of man, the author proceeds to remark the suffering, which is the result of it. And he supports his observations on the general misery of the world by the well-known testimony of Solomon, and by some judicious remarks on the sufficiency of his evidence.

'The language of complaint and murmuring is to be heard, not only among the poor, and those who have been tumbled down from rank and opulence into deep affliction, but from those, who yet stand on an eminence, and seem to have every thing at command. Something is still denied them, or there is some impediment in the way, which prevents their happiness. And were the state of their minds better known, they would not be regarded with envy. They feel an emptiness and a disappointment in the midst of all their abundance, and with every possible accommodation. Their titles, their equipage, their extensive domains, rather create than satisfy desires, increase their cares and perplexities, but can never secure their peace.

'Let one instance suffice instead of a thousand: and it is one, which it should seem God himself has selected and held up for our admonition. Solomon was well formed to take an estimate of human life, and, after a wise and attentive survey, he thus records the result of his observations: "All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. —I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." This is not the conclusion of a speculative recluse, totally ignorant of life; or of a gloomy ascetic, who had no taste for pleasure, no sensibilities in his soul; or of an envious disappointed mind, which may induce a man to speak contemptuously of what he cannot possess; but it is the instruction derived from sound wisdom and large experience, it is the admonition of him, who, with great refinement of sentiment, had strong passions; who could command every gratification, and ac-

tually "withheld not his heart from any joy," determining to make a full trial whether the world could render him truly happy. A thousand experiments were made, but they all failed; and at last, with bitterness and anguish, he felt and owned his folly, warning others that they never could succeed better than himself, and that every scheme for attaining earthly bliss must end in disappointment and misery.' P. 224.

The Essays on Man's State of Condemnation, and inability to recover himself, introduce the method of reconciliation to God, by the resources of which they are obviated and removed; and by which an opportunity is offered to all, of readoption into the benefits of the first covenant.

On the Humiliation of Christ; his appearance at so long an interval from the event which occasioned it, is accounted for by its having afforded a more complete and experimental conviction of the inability of man to devise any help for himself. But this we do not extract, as it has appeared before in Mr. R.'s Scripture Characters. The idea that the benefits of our Lord's death and intercession extend to other worlds beside our own, is probably adopted from Lord Bacon's confession of faith.

The example of Jesus Christ is proposed as a model of obedience: and the duty of continually endeavouring to imitate him is forcibly enjoined as of indispensable obligation upon all christians; but with particular emphasis on the teachers of religion.

In the two Essays on the Atonement, considerable ability is exerted in unfolding the subject in a full and particular manner. The reflections are adapted to make a salutary and practical impression: and this effect is aided by the copiousness and accuracy with which the doctrine is traced to its different consequences and relations. From the connexion of the parts with each other, it would however be difficult to give a general idea of it without transcribing the whole.

In treating of the mysterious subjects of the Trinity and the godhead of the Saviour, we think some texts are introduced, and some inferences drawn from scripture, which are very remotely connected with the positions which they are intended to support. The indulgence of a latitude of interpretation, where the ground to be maintained is important, we presume to be dangerous. These doctrines rest upon the firm and unassailable basis of so many express texts, as to render it entirely unnecessary to superadd citations whose support is questionable.

At P. 444, an instance of verbal inaccuracy occurs, at which we were much surprized. 'To join issue with his foes,'

is used to signify community of interest with them; whereas 'to join issue,' is the act of two parties engaged in litigation in a court of justice.

The second volume opens with the subject of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. Here also we are inclined to lament the unnecessary multiplication of texts, a part of which, selected with care, would, we are of opinion, have placed the doctrine in a more distinct and satisfactory point of view. Texts and arguments of decided weight and authority are produced by the author, and supported by circumstances and events of the gospel history. Surely after this, the question is rather obscured than assisted by loading it with inferential deduction.

At p. 26, is an observation to which we are not prepared to give our assent.

'It must not pass unnoticed, that even that mechanical kind of skill, which was requisite for preparing the proper furniture of the tabernacle, was communicated by him to Bezaleel and Aholiab. And why should not the ingenuity of artificers, in all their useful inventions, be considered as his gracious gift for the benefit of mankind?'

Surely this is not a fair conclusion: for are not Bezaleel and Aholiab distinguished from other artificers by those very gifts?

On the necessity of the Holy Spirit's agency to form right dispositions in the minds of christians and to support and direct them in the path of duty, Mr. Robinson is very strenuous. The ample and satisfactory manner, in which he has laid down this doctrine, will, we conceive, leave no doubt upon unprejudiced minds of our having the unquestionable, and repeated authority of scripture for believing it. He is equally assiduous in guarding against the fallacious pretences of those who abuse and pervert the doctrine. His cautions, at p. 133, against such unsound and delusive claims are so well drawn up, that we lament our inability to insert them.

The doctrine of justification occupies sixty pages, a considerable portion of so comprehensive a work, but certainly not more than the importance of the subject demands.—We wave the controversial view of a question, on both sides of which have appeared men, whose piety, learning, and abilities we revere. We are aware with Mr. Robinson, that his opinions will not meet with an universally favourable reception. But as the object of the work is to promote the practice of piety and the relative duties, his represen-

tations, if calculated to secure this point, have answered his purpose, and we think he may safely rest the merit of his performance on this test. To those who estimate a chapter or a book by its title, and acquit or condemn by this summary process, the words 'justification by faith alone,' will probably be an insuperable objection: and as they usually apply the same compendious method in judging of men, that regulates their opinion of books, they will be ready to condemn Mr. Robinson under some general class, to save themselves the trouble of examining his individual claim to attention. Their decision, however, is of very little importance. If serious, sensible, and reflecting men entertain apprehensions of the abuse of this doctrine, as tending to weaken the obligations of morality, his statement, when fairly considered, will vindicate itself. His exact regard to scripture and conformity to the articles of the establishment, his caution in laying down the doctrine, and guarding it from misapprehension and perversion, and his explicit sentiments on sanctification and obedience, shew beyond all doubt that he is no preacher of what is called faith without works. Faith as a principle, and obedience as its effect, are distinguished by him without being separated, and the patient examination of these two parts of the subject which Mr. Robinson solicits, will prove that no such divorce is intended. Let him speak for himself.

'The design of these essays is to exhibit the grand outlines of the christian system; to give, in their order and connection, a clear representation of the doctrines revealed, and of the duties prescribed. It is desirable, that our readers may not only be impressed with some things of peculiar magnitude and importance, but take a comprehensive view, and admire the consistency and excellence of the whole together. They should therefore be cautioned not to be precipitate in their decisions, not hastily to receive an objection or a prejudice in their minds, much less to condemn, and reject any detached parts, till they have considered the plan throughout.' P. 293.

Referring to several texts just cited, he says in the same essay,

'From these and various other scriptures it is manifest, that real christians are not merely dedicated to God by profession, or distinguished from others by an external badge, or by religious ceremonies, but are possessed of an internal excellency, the enlivening, purifying grace of "the Spirit of holiness," by which they are "made to differ," as "a peculiar people." This should appear in them by a growing hatred of sin and deliverance from its power, by the vigorous exercise and increase of all holy affections. Thus the various parts of the christian character are exhibited, improved, and per-

fected; "the fruits of righteousness" are brought forth and matured; humility, fear, love, zeal, gentleness, temperance, purity, and heavenly-mindedness, are preserved and nurtured, till they are advanced to a state of completeness. This is "sanctification." P. 334.

Again,

'From this view of the subject it appears, that sanctification ought not to be confounded with justification. It is not the same thing, but perfectly distinct, and an additional blessing in the great scheme of man's salvation. They are mentioned in the very same passages, as two different points, to each of which the proper place and importance should be assigned in our system. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us,—Righteousness and Sanctification."—"Ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." The believer possesses both: but they differ essentially in their nature: the one being an alteration of his state, the other of his character. By justification he is delivered from the condemning sentence of the law, and is accounted righteous as if he had fulfilled it; by sanctification the corrupt affections of his heart are subdued, and holy principles are implanted. They are to be ascribed also to separate causes; the former to the imputation of Christ's obedience, the latter to the continued communications of the spirit's influence. The former is perfect immediately upon believing, and cannot receive any addition even in heaven: the latter is defective in the most eminent saint upon earth, as to its present degree and measure; but it is progressive, just as the growth of children, the increase and ripening of the corn, and the gradual augmentation of the morning light, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." In due season, however, this shall attain the same absolute completeness as the other; and both together shall constitute the consummation of the christian's felicity in the heavenly world.' P. 343.

On the necessity of this renovation of principle in a sincere christian, his expressions are clear and correct.

'Shall we then presume to set aside, or consider as useless, that which the Lord God in his immutable council hath ordained, as the only method of training up his children for heaven? Or to what evidence shall we trust, that "it is his good pleasure to give us the kingdom," if we be entirely destitute of purity of heart? It is written "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his:" but it is added, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:—adding to your faith virtue." Here we see the proper use and salutary tendency of the doctrine of God's sovereign and free grace in Christ Jesus. Such an application of it contains the best answer to the objections commonly urged against it. It

is not for us to read the names of individuals, "who are written in the Lamb's book of life:" we must look, not to the divine decree, which is necessarily concealed from our view, but to the fruits and evidences of grace, resulting from it, and thus manifestly declaring it. Are not the interests of holiness hereby secured? Is not its necessity clearly ascertained? Such is the representation of the church of England: "Those whom God hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, be called according to his purpose by his Spirit working in due season, they through grace obey the calling:—they be made like the image of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.' P. 445.

[*To be continued.*]

ART. VII.—*An Inquiry into the System of National Defence in Great Britain. By John M'Diarmid, Esq. 2 Vols. 8vo. 18s. Boards.* Baldwin. 1805.

IN taking up this work, we were naturally induced to expect some valuable information, which, in the course of the arduous and expensive contest in which we are engaged, might be speedily and successfully reduced to practice; but how great was our disappointment, to find, that the only conclusion to be drawn from the author's reasoning, is, that all which has been done, or which in all probability will be done, for the defence of this country, tends only to obstruct the prosperity and accelerate the ruin of the empire! The sum total of the argument is—Retrace your steps, renounce all the plans, abolish all the institutions which have existed for centuries, and the ground-work is accomplished. Do nothing, but 'leave things to their natural course.'

After perusing the whole work, we were at a loss to account for the introduction of the first chapter on the 'Prosperity of Great Britain,' as many readers might foolishly imagine that it afforded a complete answer to the conclusions which are attempted to be drawn from the author's subsequent reasoning. Fifty-six pages are employed in proving, that our productive industry exhibits the strongest marks of increasing vigour and activity; that by its exertions the means of subsistence continue to increase, and also the population, which necessarily multiplies in proportion; that the soil of Great Britain affords the means of multiplying its population and productive industry many fold; that, as productive industry is the great and never-failing source of wealth, the wealth of Great Britain must necessarily be permanent and continue to increase, while that industry acts, and has the means of employing itself, and that Great Britain excels

every other nation, and continues daily to improve in private virtue of every kind, in freedom, patriotism, good order, and religion. The next two chapters, however, are intended to shew that this unparalleled prosperity is obstructed, diminished, and will probably be ruined by the means employed for the national defence, because a large number of her most vigorous subjects are withdrawn from her productive industry; and a large quantity of her annual produce is taken from maintaining productive labourers, and consumed in maintaining those who are unproductive; because the capital destined for the maintenance of productive industry is by this means diminished, and the number of labourers who might have been maintained by this capital, is therefore lost to her productive industry, and because the wealth of the nation is in consequence less by perhaps one half at the end of the century, than it otherwise would have been, and the population diminished in proportion. It is also asserted, that the freedom of the nation is endangered by the depression of spirit which necessarily follows the enormity of taxation, by the vast addition of patronage thrown into the hands of the crown, by the great body of armed men continually at the disposal of government, by the introduction into our army of a number of foreign adventurers, and by the larger portion of her citizens who are taken out of the protection of the civil, and placed under the jurisdiction of martial law. We need hardly apprise our readers of the wonderful ingenuity and novelty displayed in the collection of these important objections. Our author discovers a similar degree of industry in filling eighty pages in order to prove, that all schemes to reduce the national debt at once, are impracticable or ruinous, and that a sinking fund can only retard or palliate the pernicious effects of the funding system, while more debt is contracted than the sinking fund is calculated to redeem. The second part of Mr. M'Diarmid's Inquiry is intituled, 'Of improving the System of national Defence,' but is almost entirely occupied in shewing what, in his opinion, will *not* improve it. All foreign assistance, either in the shape of allies on equal terms, subsidized allies, or foreign mercenaries, is reprobated. The whole colonial system, and all accessions, of distant territory instead of augmenting the resources of Great Britain, are supposed to tend to their diminution, and instead of increasing her strength, to produce an unnatural weakness. What is called the mercantile system, all bounties, prohibitions, and monopolies, and the whole code of the navigation laws, are with indiscriminate indignation, pronounced fatal to the interests and prosperity of the country and destructive of the

resources more peculiarly applicable to her defence. These various topics have frequently undergone separate and ample discussion by persons of acknowledged ability, and do not, we conceive, upon the present occasion, demand particular notice. The sovereign remedy which our author deigns to propose for all these multiplied evils, is contained in these few words, without further argument or illustration. 'The best way to increase the resources of a nation, is to leave things to their natural course.'

The third chapter considers the means of rendering a people warlike; and according to the author's usual mode of reasoning, we are informed that it is not long peace, nor perpetual warfare, neither rudeness, nor a high degree of refinement, riches nor poverty, agricultural nor commercial pursuits, climate nor situation, which chiefly affect the character of a people in rendering them martial or effeminate. The abstract philosophical solution of the question is, that to render a nation warlike, they must be intrepid, hardy, patriotic, and at the same time, skilful and dexterous in the art of war. Separate sections are devoted to the consideration of these particular qualities: every thing which appears in the shape of a regulation, or which arises from any interference on the part of government, is condemned. The laws of primogeniture and entail, all hereditary honours and privileges, the establishment of public schools and colleges, every circumstance which tends in the smallest degree to obstruct the free circulation of property and the spontaneous exertions of industry, are pronounced to be hostile to the formation and support of an intrepid, hardy, and patriotic character; and our author, as before, shortly winds up the argument by declaring, 'that merely by allowing industry its free and uninterrupted course, and by permitting the whole inhabitants of a country to enjoy what ought never to be withheld from them, they may be rendered intrepid, hardy, and patriotic, universally, permanently, in the highest degree and in the manner most adapted to the purposes of warfare, as far as the defence of a nation is concerned.' Skill and dexterity are to be acquired in the same manner. Nothing whatever must be done by compulsory measures. Recruiting for the line, the militia system, the general defence act, and the volunteer establishment, as at present conducted, are all in turn reprobated, either as unconstitutional, oppressive, inefficient, or injurious to the general prosperity of the country. Having thus annihilated the whole military force of the empire, and all the existing laws upon the subject, but admitting of course, the necessity of an army

of some sort, Mr. M'Diarmid at last feels himself compelled to propose some plan by which an effective force may be raised, and has accordingly hit upon a most ingenious and satisfactory expedient. As it is inconsistent with our author's ideas that any man should be compelled or even requested to become a soldier, some inducement must necessar ily be held out, sufficiently strong to produce voluntary and effectual service. For this purpose he fixes upon an absolute exemption from the property tax in favour of all those who will at their own expense undertake the labour of military duty, and has not the smallest doubt that interest and inclination will tempt a sufficient number of individuals by this plan to form an army fully adequate to the defence of the country. The advantages of this measure are supposed to be incontestible. As the property tax does not extend to those who do not possess sixty pounds a year of clear income, the labourers and poorer classes of the community would be allowed to continue their employments without interruption, and the industry of the country would obtain a considerable relief. The greater the income is of any individual, the greater the temptation to undertake military duty, so that those who would have arms in their hands, would consist wholly of men of considerable property, having the largest stake in the country, and the strongest interest in repelling invasion, and repressing civil commotions. This proposed force is to be called the constitutional army. We are left entirely in the dark, as to the manner in which this army is to be organized, trained, or disciplined. The interference of government is at all events deprecated. Every man, it would appear, is to do that which is right in his own eyes, and the astonishing gratification of being exempted from a tax, is in the first place by magical effect, to create an army of three or four hundred thousand men, and secondly, to produce the highest degree of intrepidity, skill, and discipline.

The labours of our author, we should have supposed, had been now happily brought to a conclusion, but finding unfortunately that Ireland is not yet in a state adapted to the formation of a constitutional army, and that while government is so stupid, as to retain an inch of colonial territory, Ireland and our foreign possessions must necessarily be defended, he most reluctantly admits the propriety of having an additional force, while this necessity unhappily exists. For this purpose, he, with much seeming inconsistency, prefers a standing army to every species of temporary levies. Numerous objections may be made to such a measure, founded on his own principles. They are all, however, to be obviat-

ed in a manner indeed hitherto unknown in the history of military affairs. The life of a soldier is to be the most inviting and most agreeable in the community. No officers to be appointed from their rank or influence in society; no promotions to take place through interest or purchase; every person desirous of attaining the situation of an officer, must pass an examination before judges to be appointed for the purpose, and at first be placed in the situation of a non-commissioned officer. They then become entitled to offer themselves as candidates for commissions, and their respective claims are to be decided by competition. The whole code of martial law is to be abrogated, as unjust and oppressive, and the civil rights of the privates to remain untouched and unimpaired. But our readers, we think, must be perfectly satisfied with the account we have given of Mr. M'Diarmid's bold conceptions. When so many objections are made to almost all the existing regulations and institutions of the country, it cannot be expected that we should either have leisure or inclination to enter into a minute examination of them. We are at a loss to conceive what object the author could have in view, by presenting the public with such a performance at the present moment, nor can we say whether it would have been better timed a few centuries ago, or should have been deferred for a few centuries to come. What impression it may make upon the members of the legislature, we know not; but we venture to predict that his majesty will not be inclined to resign the command of his armies, that the house of lords will not assist in their own annihilation, and that even a house of commons will not be found bold enough, upon the recommendation of Mr. M'Diarmid, to repeal or alter all the laws, statutes, and customs of the realm, except what merely relate to personal freedom and security.

When we were about to shut the book, we discovered that two short chapters remained, of four pages each, on 'The Art of War,' and 'Fortifications,' and even in this short space expected a few practical hints at least upon the subject of batteries, lines of circumvallation, Martello towers, catamarans, and infernal machines; but there are several reasons, our author informs us, which render it necessary to omit the consideration of these topics for the present. The chief reason is, that no complete system either of military discipline, or the art of war, has hitherto been founded on principles demonstrably true; and that without an investigation into principles, it would be idle to propose any changes in the systems in use. This is illustrated by an anecdote which,

whether it be applicable to any other part of our author's speculations, every reader will judge for himself.

'The bad effects of allowing changes to be made by guess, have been proved by innumerable instances in the art of war. The Marshal Lascy, about the middle of last century, thought he should produce an admirable reform in the Austrian armies, by converting their swarms of irregular troops into regular battalions; yet this change, while it produced a very fine appearance, is blamed as the cause of those numerous disasters which the Austrians experienced during the war of the French revolution. The opinion of no man ought to be taken as a rule for conducting the affairs of nations, unless he can give a distinct reason for that opinion. While the affairs of nations, whether military or civil, are led one way or another, as chance directs, by the bungling guess-work of opinion, instead of being guided by rules founded on plain and intelligible reasoning, mistakes and failures must continue to be the result, and succeeding schemes bear the same reproach with the Marshal Lascy.'

We cannot anticipate what may be the effect or ultimate fate of this ingenious and bold 'Inquiry into the System of National Defence,' which embraces so many other topics, that it might with equal propriety have been intituled an Essay on Population, Agriculture, Commerce, Finance, Navigation, Colonization, or any thing else. We shall rest satisfied in having given a short but faithful account of its contents, and shall not attempt by rash praise or censure, either to promote or obstruct its progress to the closet, the shelf, or any other place; but adopting the author's favourite maxim, 'leave it to its natural course.'

ART. VIII.—*Memoirs of Samuel Foote, with a Collection of his Bon Mots, Anecdotes, &c. mostly original; and three of his dramatic Pieces not published in his Works. By William Cooke, Esq.* 3 *vols.* 8vo. Phillips. 1805.

A LIFE of the celebrated Foote was a desideratum. It is now near thirty years since his death, and yet (as Mr. Cooke observes in his introduction) 'except a meagre collection of a few dates and facts published in the "Biographia Dramatica," and since literally retailed in a number of theatrical catchpennies, no written account of him is extant.' Mr. Cooke is at a loss to account for this neglect, but imagines that it may have proceeded from the interested reasons of some friends, who did not wish to make enemies by propagating his satirical remarks; from the incapacity of others, who felt themselves unable 'to carry a bon mot steadily;' and from the indolence of those who were fully qualified for the office

of a biographer, but who suffered 'the business of to-morrow' to go off from day to day 'to the last syllable of recorded time.' Perhaps one reason of this neglect may be, that the incidents of Foote's life were of so public a nature, and his 'witty sayings' so current in conversation, that his literary friends deemed it useless to record what every person knew. Whatever the cause of this deficiency in biography may have been, Mr. C. has undertaken to fill up the void, and he has performed the task in a very respectable and pleasing manner. Here a question very naturally occurs: what pretensions has Mr. C. to the discharge of this office? To this we have a reply, which is perfectly satisfactory. Our biographer informs us, that 'very early in life he had the pleasure of being introduced to this genuine son of comic humour; and finding in him all the charms of conversation, which could attach a young man with a literary and lively turn of mind, he was careful in recollecting and noting down as many of his anecdotes, conversations, &c. as convenience would permit: not with any intent, at that time, to publish them; but as the records of a man, who drew on him the gaze of the fashionable and literary world, as the reminiscences of hours, which afforded such exquisite delight.' After the death of Foote, Mr. C. continued his acquaintance 'with many respectable persons, who were the intimates of his late friend's earlier days, and who had seen him in all the situations of his varied life. From these he was curious to glean as much of his manners, habits, and conversation as he could: and from their readiness to oblige, as well as from the researches of an old and valuable *friend*,' (whose name, which he is not permitted to mention here, would be a passport for every thing curious or authentic in literary or dramatic history) 'he has collected such materials as emboldened him to publish these volumes.'

We could have wished to be informed, who is meant by this 'old friend,' not for the gratification of idle curiosity, but to enable us to judge, whether under actual circumstances Mr. C. may with propriety 'presume that his performance is the best that can *now* be effected.' We are very willing to allow that it is the best which has yet appeared; but, unless the late Mr. Murphy is the old friend whose researches are here alluded to, we cannot subscribe to the former supposition. Mr. Murphy was the intimate friend of Foote, and was so well acquainted with the literary characters, and with the theatrical history of that period, that he was repeatedly intreated by his friends to publish a piece of biography, for which they knew that he had collected ample materials, and of which they were of opinion, that he might

have made a very entertaining work. Foote has been dead thirty years, about nine years before which period Mr. C.'s acquaintance with him commenced. It is very singular that Mr. C. should have delayed his publication for 30 years, and that he should publish it immediately after the death of Mr. Murphy. Mr. C.'s introduction is dated August 1805, and Mr. M. died in June of the same year. If our author has had access to Mr. M.'s papers, why not acknowledge the favour, as it would stamp additional value on his work? It would undeniably fix its character, as the best performance, that could *now* be effected. If Mr. C. has not had an opportunity of perusing and collecting from Mr. M.'s researches, we must suspend our judgment, till we hear further on the subject. From the coincidence of dates, and from the coincidence of character, we are inclined to believe that this 'old friend, whose name would be a passport for every thing curious or authentic in literary or dramatic history,' must be *aut Murphy, aut Diabolus:* but we cannot conjecture, why 'the permission to mention his name' should be withheld. Alas! poor Murphy! The view of age and infirmity is at all times afflicting, but where the individual has been in early life the object of applause and admiration; the gay companion of the great, the learned, and the witty; a beloved and valued guest at those festive boards, where genius and wealth are happy to interchange their various gifts, the contrast between the summer and winter of manhood is doubly impressive, and the heart feels a more striking and more shivering sense of the vanity of human enjoyments. A bodily infirmity, which was irksome to himself and to his friends, deprived Murphy, during the few latter years of his life, of the pleasures of society. It was his custom for many summers to walk in the middle of the afternoon on the sunny side of Brompton-row, where he usually stopped to refresh himself with a glass of brandy and water, and a pipe of tobacco at the Grapes Tavern. Not more than twenty days before his death, one of our brethren saw him in his usual walk, and followed him into the parlour of the tavern, for the sake of enjoying the melancholy pleasure of sitting a few minutes in his company, conjecturing from the very feeble and almost tottering steps of the old gentleman, that in all probability he might never have another opportunity. Murphy seated himself in an arm-chair, and lighted his pipe, but soon dropped it on the table, and fell into a dose, during which he breathed very hard: when he awoke, his pipe was burnt out; he shook the ashes into the grate, and held the pipe for a long time in his hand, but did not light it again. After fumbling for many minutes to reach

the button of his coat, which he buttoned with much difficulty, he rose, and seemed to be rather refreshed in spirit as he rose, to finish his sunny walk—now his chief happiness! Our brother made haste to open the door for him, and bowed very low to conceal the tears that were starting in his eyes, at this view of the wreck which all our gaiety, all our wit, all our strength must finally undergo!

The cares and infirmities of Murphy's age were alleviated by a pension from the crown, and, though the gay companions of his brighter hours were gone long before him, he was not left entirely alone, nor wholly without a friend. The summer before last we heard him relate an instance of generosity in his friend Mr. Coutts, the banker, in the following words. —'I had a ticket in the lottery, which was drawn a blank, but produced me five hundred pounds.—My friend Mr. Coutts met me in the street, and told me, that if I would promise to agree to it, he would make a bargain with me, which would enable me to pay him the five hundred pounds which I was indebted to him, in a manner perfectly easy to myself. He made me promise to agree to his terms before he named them. I readily assented. Well then, Murphy, (he replied) you have, as I am informed, a ticket in the lottery: you shall pay me that five hundred pounds when you get the ten thousand pound prize, and not before.'

We trust, that our readers will not require an apology for this digression, into which we were partly led by Mr. Cooke's affecting account of the close of Foote's life,* VOL. I. P. 231.

Mr. C. enters into a needless digression to trace what could have given the first impulse to Foote's genius. 'He could not have it from his father, who, by every account was a plain honest country gentleman; nor from his brother, who was imbecile both in mind and body.' Our editor here leads himself into the old tortoise-dilemma, for the ques-

* In addition to Mr. C.'s account of Foote's birth-place, viz. Truro, in Cornwall, we take this opportunity of mentioning that the house, in which he was born is now a respectable inn, the Red Lion. Foote's father had many sisters, who married into very reputable Cornish families, so that there are many of his relatives now resident in the west. When his cousins came to London, they were afraid to call on Foote, lest he should *take them off*. One of them, who was not so apprehensive, informed us, that whenever he visited him at North End, he found his mantlepiece loaded with cards of visitation from the first nobility and gentry in the kingdom. Foote's house at North End stands on the right hand side of the road leading from Walham Green to Hammersmith turnpike. It was lately in possession of Mr. Stretton, the brewer. A friend had lately great difficulty in finding the house, but after many fruitless inquiries among the neighbours, met with an old man in a poor cottage, who was able to point it out. So transient are all things; little more than thirty years ago, there were few in the fashionable world who had not paid a visit to North End!

tion would occur, if he had it from his brother, from whom did his brother receive it? Besides, his brother was younger than himself, so that this unnecessary dilemma produces increasing difficulties. Mr. C. thinks that this talent for humour must be ascribed to his mother, from whom he received it as an hereditary endowment. Mrs. Foote was a lively witty woman, and without any laborious disquisition it might have been stated, that her peculiar flow of spirits gave an additional bias to her son's natural propensity.

However, the history of Foote's life is written in a pleasing, interesting manner, with judgment and with feeling; the portrait, which is prefixed to the first volume, is a very excellent likeness. The bon mots and anecdotes, which are three hundred and twenty-two in number, are told with much spirit. Many of them are new to us, so that Mr. C. has not only the merit of a Pisistratus, from arranging in an uniform collection what was scattered up and down through the various editions of Joe Miller, Timothy Grig's Delight, the Fun-Box broke open, Quoz Quidnunc's merry Jests, and other works of genuine humour, but he has also a superior claim to our thanks for the introduction of several original pieces of wit. Among numerous others the following, which may serve as a specimen, has (at least to us) the merit of novelty.

'Expecting a gentleman to dine with him at North End who was remarkable for wearing a black scratch wig, and who did not come in time, Foote was every now and then on the look out for him. At last perceiving him riding up the avenue, "Aye, here he comes at last," said he; "But are you sure it is he?" (asked one of the company impatient for dinner) 'Why, at this distance I would not take my oath of it: but it is either he or Charles the Second, for there is a *black wig* evidently bobbing up and down *among the oaks.*'

The anecdotes of Dr. Monsey might very well have been spared: he seems to have thought that coarse impudence was wit. The story of the admirable Crichton, and Dr. Barnard's verses, certainly should be omitted: they are so well known, that none but very desperate bookmakers would enlist them into their service. In return for the pleasure we have received from these three volumes, we will relate an anecdote of Garrick, which has not found its way into any publication relative to the history of that theatrical hero.

Garrick was spending a few days in the summer at a gentleman's house in Suffolk, and large parties were invited daily to meet him at dinner. One afternoon a country squire was to be of the party, who was very apt to joke in a boisterous

and vulgar manner. Garrick's host, with his guests' consent, concerted a plan to keep the noisy wit in decent order. When the squire came, he was introduced to Garrick, as a private gentleman, who was a very good tempered cheerful man, but (as the master of the house informed him privately) very apt to be seized with fits of desperate madness at the least attempt at a *joke*. The squire promised to be orderly, and was seated opposite Garrick at the table. Dinner passed off very well. Not many glasses had circulated before the country wag began to be merry in his usual way. Garrick assumed a dejected look, and appeared very restless and uneasy. The master of the house winked at the squire, who saw the uncomfortable sensations which he had occasioned, and immediately was quiet. The glass and the conversation circulated, and the squire again forgot the caution, which he had promised. In the midst of a fit of laughter at one of his own rude jokes, his eye caught Garrick's, who had put on a King-Lear look, and seemed at that moment in a paroxysm of madness. The squire leaped from his chair, and actually jumped out of the window.

MONTHLY CATALOGUE.

RELIGION.

ART. 9.—*The principles of Religion, as professed by the Society of Christians usually called Quakers, written for the Instruction of their Youth, and for the Information of Strangers, by Henry Tuke.* 12*mo.* *pp.* 178. 2*s.* 6*d.* Philips and Fardon. 1805.

THIS volume of Mr. Tuke's may be considered as divided into two parts; in the first of which, extending to P. 69, the principles of religion are treated of, in so far as they are holden in common (or nearly so) by Quakers, and other christians These relate principally to the being of God, the immortality of the soul, the inspiration, genuineness, and authenticity of the scriptures; the fall, and redemption of man; the doctrine of universal redemption; the divinity of Christ, the doctrine of the Trinity, of justification, and of the resurrection of the dead: the evidences of the truth of christianity from the lives of its first professors, and from miracles, &c. the doctrine of grace, of the influences of the Spirit, and of the uni-

versality of grace, with some others. Within limits so narrow it cannot be supposed that much accurate or important information can be conveyed respecting so many grand and fundamental doctrines. Mr. Tuke must not be displeased if we express our hope and persuasion, that very few of his berthren will be disposed to acquiesce solely in the scanty repast which he has placed before them. The remainder of the volume is occupied in an exposition of the peculiar principles of friends. We have very little reason to be dissatisfied with the manner and temper in which Mr. Tuke has executed this portion of his undertaking; he expresses himself with considerable moderation, and not without a general friendly regard and respect for the feelings and principles of the great bulk of christians. To many of his sentiments also, notwithstanding the division of his work in which he has thought good to place them, we, and no doubt many others, are readily disposed to accede. But with regard to the main and leading principles, especially to the most important of all, those respecting the sacraments, Mr. Tuke has not inclined us to remit or relax one tittle. We see in him little else than the old errors, and palpable misinterpretations of scripture which have been confuted times without number. We would specify particularly his argument on the sacrament of baptism, p. 99—109, as containing more important and more lamentable misinterpretations of the word of God, than can easily be found again within the same compass in any other writer. Nor do we see any prospect of a remedy against the recurrence of similar evils, till the time shall come, when a learned education, and a recourse to the original scriptures shall be more frequent among Mr. Tuke's brethren than they have ever yet been.

Art. 10.—*The Dissenter's Appeal against the Attacks of the Rev. Rowland Hill, in the Conclusion of a Book, entitled 'A Warning to Professors; containing aphoristic Observations on the Nature and Tendency of public Amusements,' by an Independant.* 12mo. 6d. Conder. 1805.

THE controversies respecting the use and abuse of public amusements, which has lately occupied the press in several pamphlets, has here given occasion to a fresh dispute: so true is it, 'that the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water.' Mr. Rowland Hill has given offence to Dissenters by reflecting upon them in his *aphoristic Observations*, for their devotedness to the world, their inquisitorial discipline, their heresies and schism. In part of this charge, many perhaps will agree with the writer of this appeal, that Mr. H. approaches sufficiently nearly to an exemplification of the old adage, that it is 'Satan correcting sin.'

The Independant who *appeals* against these attacks, is plainly a man of some talents; but they are disgraced by a violent, and not very liberal temper. There are circumstances, it appears, connected with this quarrel, which may give a keenness to the feelings of the parties, but will hardly seem important enough to concern the

public. The dissenting churches are taunted by Mr. H. with the term, 'their *little* party;' and he endeavours to excite their envy, by boasting of the 'thousand good communicants,' whom he presides over at Surreychapel. Meanwhile, he too has his complaints, that the *independent* discipline is so hierarchical, that a peep into the chapel in Great Surrey-street is repaid with excommunication: and the Independant again rejoins, that 'within his own experience, Mr. H. has been the means of setting the daughter against the parent, and the sister against the brother, by harangues from the pulpit similar to those now issued from the press.' (p. 35.) But what has a reviewer to do with these matters? Unless indeed it be to intreat his readers to gather from them a solemn warning, that they beware themselves of giving occasion to the inevitable calamities which spring from religious disunion, by their own deviations into schismatical communions.

With the same view of profiting our brethren, and collecting for our readers such specimens, as may most tend to their instruction and amusement, we will lay before them from the present pamphlet, a *curiosity*, the *Dissenter's* plea against *dissent* and separation, on the pretence of *better edification*. We have often thought of drawing up a vindication of our establishment, to be collected solely from the practices, and to be expressed in the very words and arguments of Dissenters. Any one who might find inclination for such a work and more leisure than we possess, would meet with no lack of materials, and the engagement we can answer for it, would be both instructive and entertaining. Let him begin then his collections with what follows:

'And when in his name, and by his authority, we have been admitted in, it is an affront to this authority, and a breach of our fealty, *to seek* occasions of withdrawing. Occasions truly there be *sometimes* for such a proceeding; *Churches are not to be made prisons for his saints to stay and starve in;* (it is very melancholy when things are come to such a pass) yet where there has been a solemn giving up of ourselves to Christ, and to one another, to walk together in the faith and order of the Gospel as a Church, the withdrawing from such communion, upon *slight* and *trivial* grounds, at the back-door (for instance, of caprice and humour, or upon a change in the ministry of the church, or on complaint of not profiting by the word, or a *fond* expectation of profiting more by another,) &c. while your own pastor abides in the truth, and labours according to his abilities for the good of your souls: I say, the withdrawing *merely* on such accounts as these, is not only a damping the spirits of the *minister* you leave, but a disheartening *the whole church*, with whom you have walked; and, in a degree, it is breaking covenant with them to desire a dismission, and appears to be a seeking your own things, rather than the things of Jesus Christ.'

ART. 11.—*Occasional Discourses on various Subjects, with copious Annotations. By Richard Munkhouse, D. D. of Queen's College, Oxford, and Minister of St. John Baptist's Church, Wakefield, in three volumes.* 8vo. Longman. 1805.

DR. MUNKHOUSE is already, we presume, pretty well known as a preacher, by a great portion of our readers. These volumes contain twenty-five separate discourses, besides a tract entitled 'a Word for the Poor,' of which number, six or seven have been already before the public, and have obtained a considerable share of approbation and success. In the present republication we are informed, this part of the work has been carefully revised, and undergone material alterations.

In a copious preface, Dr. Munkhouse recapitulates and introduces us to many of the principal subjects of his discourses, several of which, it will easily be seen, possess a large share of importance and interest. Such are the Injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, the Advantages of Friendly Societies, the Importance of Charitable Institutions for the Instruction and Education of the Poor, the Service and Duties of Volunteers, and the Improvement of Psalmody, a very important Part of Divine Worship, &c. &c.

With regard to the manner in which these discourses are composed, Dr. Munkhouse informs us, that it was his 'highest ambition,' that they should be found unexceptionably benevolent, humane, pious, loyal, and patriotic. These are words of high import, and that preacher has surely ample reason to be gratified with his success, to whose efforts they may with justice be attributed. Nor do we think that Dr. Munkhouse has greatly mistaken his talents, or fallen far short from his aim. We are of opinion that he deserves much commendation, and of that particular kind which it has been his ambition to obtain.

His style is not always sufficiently correct; and it abounds too much, for our taste, with words, and those often not plain and simple enough to be profitable to all his hearers, nor on a level, as they would better have been, with the humblest capacity. But in extenuation of literary blemishes, Dr. M. alludes to an excuse, for which, while we regret the necessity, we shall, we trust, always be disposed to regard it with tenderness and respect.

ART. 12.—*A Dissertation on the External Evidences of the Truth of the Christian Religion, published in Pursuance of the Will of the late Rev. John Hulse, of Elworth, Cheshire, as having gained the annual Prize in* 1804, *instituted by him in the University of Cambridge. By the Rev. George Downing Whittington, of St. John's College.* Miller. 8vo. *pp.* 42. 2*s.* 1805.

AN annual prize for the best dissertation on some sacred subject, was another expedient for the encouragement of theological learning within the University of Cambridge, devised by the piety of the late Rev. John Hulse, in addition to the institution of the christian

advocateship, the first fruits of which we announced in our review for September. (P. 94). The candidates for the dissertation prize, are by the rules of the foundation to be below the degree of Master of Arts. Their efforts therefore must not be expected to be so elaborate and profound as those of their elder and more experienced fellow-labourer, the christian advocate.

We have perused Mr. Whittington's Dissertation on the external Evidences of the Truth of the Christian Religion with much satisfaction. After the labours of the many eminent divines who have gone before him in the discussion of the same important subject, it will not be looked for that we should promise to those whom we may tempt to become his readers, (especially if we consider those unavoidable disadvantages to which we have briefly alluded) much novelty, or any very arduous and abstruse investigation in Mr. Whittington's disquisition. Nor will it be expedient, that we should enter at large into arguments which are, or ought to be, already familiar to most persons into whose hands our critique can come. It may be sufficient then to observe, that Mr. Whittington has more than satisfied our *expectations;* he has gratified our *wishes.* His arguments, generally speaking, are proper to the subject, and are very well stated. In matter and in manner they deserve the exalted praise of being rational, temperate, and judicious to a degree much beyond the reach of ordinary and youthful writers: the style is, upon the whole, correct, and by its simplicity and clearness does credit to Mr. W.'s good taste. Should he proceed as he has begun, we can assure him, that it will give us pleasure to meet him again in the department of literature in which he now appears. Nor if he so perseveres, shall we despair of seeing him succeed, in due time, to continue and sustain the reputation of a society which has long been distinguished for its successful attachment to theological studies.

ART. 13.—*Serious Thoughts on the Birth of a Child. By the Rev. Thomas Porter. 2d Edition.* 12*mo.* Johnson. 1805.

THESE 'SeriousThoughts' possess much energy and weight, however they may be considered by a fashionable and unthinking world. The author is firmly persuaded of their importance, and from a second edition having been called for, we hope they have proved of that utility which the author designed.

ART. 14.—*An Answer to some Pleas in Favour of Idolatry and Indulgences in the Romish Church. Addressed to the Friends of the Protestant Faith. By the Rev. R. B. Nichols, L.L.B.* 8vo. 1*s.* Nichols. 1805.

THE zeal of the pious rector of Stoney Stanton has eaten him up: in the space of thirty-five pages, he has torn every rag from the back of the scarlet whore, and exposed her nakedness in all the rant of declamation.

MEDICINE.

ART. 15.—*Cow-pox Inoculation no Security against Small-pox Infection. By William Rowley, M.D. &c. To which are added the Modes of treating the beastly new Diseases, produced from Cow-pox, &c. with the Author's certain, experienced, and successful Mode of inoculating for the Small-pox, now become necessary from Cow-pox failure.* 8vo. *pp.* 82. 2*s.* 6*d.* Murray. 1805.

DR. ROWLEY's pen is prolific. Possibly his opinion is,

'neque,

Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris,
Mercedem tuleris.'

We sincerely condole with him, that he is under the necessity of so repeatedly assuring the public of his 'long, very long, long, experience,' (P. 20,) in quarto and pamphlet, in Latin and English, in newspaper advertisements, and lastly on dead walls and deserted houses. The 'Nervous Cordial,' and the 'Anti-Impetigines,' do not salute our eyes more frequently in every corner of the metropolis, than does the title-page of this pamphlet. The great boast of 'experience,' however, which is here reiterated in almost every page, is in its present application peculiarly unfortunate. For what additional elucidation can half a century of experience in medical routine, contribute to a disease, which *eight* years ago was unknown to the profession? Elucidation, indeed, is not the object of this publication. It is intended, as the title-page informs us, rather to supersede inquiry; to promote the reintroduction of the variolous pestilence; and to inform the world, that, when that pestilence shall most desirably rage, Dr. Rowley is at hand with a 'certain, experienced, and successful method' of combating its virulence.

Philosophy and science shrink from this unmanly, illiberal, and disgraceful contest, in which the calm investigation of truth is impeded by every means which prejudice can suggest. The most numerous, the most respectable, and the most respected members of the profession, in their zeal for the interests of humanity, relinquished with one accord a source of unceasing emolument, and adopted a practice, which demanded little of their interference, and which spread no disease abroad to require their aid. Yet they have been stigmatized as acting from interested motives, by those men who are averse from relinquishing those advantages retained at the expence of the misery of mankind. The facility of the new practice, and the slight disorder which ensued, have, unfortunately, led in some cases to inattention in the practitioner; the disease failed, from inadvertance, to produce the wanted security; and small-pox has, in consequence, in a very few instances occurred. What has followed? Those who know the history of inoculation of the small-pox itself, (now so much extolled by the opponents of cow-pock,) or of the introduction of Peruvian bark, or of other valuable

changes in the practice of medicine, will not wonder that, in this instance, there should be found practitioners ready to seize every opportunity of signalizing themselves, by a determined opposition to the new practice. They will only wonder that the ingenuity of the opponents, in all those examples, should have furnished them with so little variety in their modes and instruments of attack.

The character of this pamphlet, which is coarse and most inelegant in diction, may be comprehended from these general observations. Of the vulgar prejudices with which it abounds, in regard to beasts and 'beastly humours,' (which from childhood to old age, afford us our most wholesome nutriment) we shall merely say, that for him who is weak enough to entertain them, we have a sincere pity; and for him who urges them before the public, not believing them, a most sovereign contempt. Of the occasional pious cant and hypocritical sophistry, which is equally applicable to all inoculation, nay to all human attempts to alleviate human misery, we shall say nothing. Of the *facts* we must observe, that all those which have been before published, are again brought forward, though several of them are extremely doubtful, and several absolutely disproved; that others rest on the authority of *Doctor* Squirrel, Mr. Roberts, and other persons equally distinguished in the profession; and that several of them are mentioned without any reference or authority at all. The pamphlet will, indeed, signalise its author; but the distinction will be such as we would not willingly see conferred on our decided enemy. We would not willingly say, 'Oh that mine enemy would write *such* a book!'

ART. 16.—*Expositions on the Inoculation of the Small-pox, and of the Cow-pock.* 8vo. *pp.* 15. 6*d.* Mawman. 1805.

THIS little rational address 'to parents,' by an annonymous but benevolent writer, merits their attention. When the efforts of prejudice and sophistry have spread a too general alarm for the inefficacy of the vaccine preventive, and the inoculation of small-pox, has diffused the pestilence, in its most fatal forms, into every alley and corner of the metropolis, they will do well to listen to the dictates of disinterested humanity, if the preservation of their offspring be deemed worthy of their care. These pages contain expositions of many mistakes, which have been made, both in regard to the cow-pock itself, and the diseases which have been said to succeed it; and afford very simple, clear, and satisfactory answers to several of the most popular objections to the practice.

It may not be improper to add, that, while writing these remarks, we received a letter from a medical friend, now in Vienna. He informs us that the progress of the cow-pock is most satisfactory on the continent, 'where not a single objection,' he says, 'not a suspicion of its inefficacy is to be heard.'

POLITICS.

ART. 17.—*Thoughts on the Civil Condition and Relations of the Roman Catholic Clergy, Religion, and People, in Ireland. By Theobald M'Kenna, Esq. Barrister at Law.* 8vo. *pp.* 193. Budd. 1805.

THE late decision in the houses of parliament, having, at least for a time, set the Catholic question at rest, we have some pleasure in taking notice of a pamphlet, which discovers, we conceive, the true spirit and manner in which this subject should be considered. Instead of idle declamation about oppression, abstract rights of citizenship, and religious persecution, Mr. M'Kenna enters the dwellings of the Roman Catholic priests, and visits the huts and hovels of their parishioners. He takes a particular view of their habits, sentiments, prejudices, and wants, and without giving them power or privileges of which they hardly know the use or value, considers how the government may secure their attachment and loyalty, by the gradual introduction and diffusion of moral information, industry, and comfort. The allotment of small farms at an easy rent to the parish priests, and other measures calculated to ameliorate the general condition of the catholics, are proposed and discussed with much good sense and moderation. The whole of the performance discovers accurate observation; and is well adapted to blunt the edge of party violence, and to substitute small, but progressive practical benefits in the room of sudden, and in a great measure imaginary and theoretical advantages.

ART. 18.—*Considerations upon the best Means of insuring the Internal Defence of Great Britain. By Capt. Barber, commanding the Duke of Cumberland's Sharp-Shooters.* 8vo. *pp.* 63. Egerton. 1805.

WE have every reason and inclination to applaud the zeal and activity of Capt. Barber, in the service of his country; but think he might have spared himself the trouble of becoming an author for the sole purpose of pronouncing a florid eulogy on the acknowledged utility of marksmen, as the companions of regular troops in an enclosed country.

NOVELS.

ART. 19.—*The Count de Valmont, or the Errors of Reason, a Novel, in Three Volumes, translated from the French* 8vo. Hatchard. 1805.

THE Editor of this work has exhibited much judgment in the selection of the letters for translation, as in the original it consists of six volumes, in which much was uninteresting and uninstructive to an English and protestant reader. The language of the translation

is good, and it has in a great degree the spirit of an original work, whose avowed object is to combat the irreligious opinions which have been so often revived and maintained by infidels, in different ages of the world; and for this purpose the form of a novel is adopted, as being the most likely to engage general attention. In some works of this sort, written with a good intention, the erroneous sentiments are stated in a manner so evidently disadvantageous, that their refutation is rendered less useful by the difficulty of recognizing them, when they are adorned with the splendid diction and insinuating language of infidel writers. In this work, on the contrary, the objections are clearly and fairly stated, and the sensible refutation which follows them, must therefore make more impression on the minds of young people, to whom we particularly recommend these letters, as containing more sound reasoning and useful reflections than most of those which have lately fallen under our notice.

The characters we meet with in this novel, though they cannot boast of much diversity, are well drawn; that of Emilia is very amiable, and rendered interesting by her virtue. Valmont's description of his feelings, when he professed pyrrhonism, and doubted of every thing, is striking; his sacrifice of his passion for Mlle. de Senneville is properly attributed to an increased respect for the christian religion; and his progress from infidelity to christianity is well described. Perhaps there is something too fanciful in the Marquis's advice to his son to address his prayers to Truth, of whom he speaks as a female deity, and thus endeavours to recall him to the Christian religion, by making him utter a pagan invocation; neither is a sufficient degree of blame attached to Valmont's transgression of the law of God, in taking away the life of the Baron de Lausane.

ART. 20.—*Mental Recreations, Four Danish and German Tales.* 8vo. pp. 158. Baldwin. 1805.

THIS publication at this season may safely be recommended as a fire-screen: it will shield the face from the fire, and employ the eyes, without arresting the attention so much as to prevent the holder from participating in the pleasure of the conversation of the company.

ART. 21.—*St. Julian; in a Series of Letters. By J. T. Serres.* 8vo. pp. 167. Ridgway. 1805.

THE shape of this octavo is neat, the type smart, and the margin broad and handsome. We cannot find any fault with the form, fashion, or shape of the cup in which its water-gruel contents are handed down to us: but even with our water-gruel we like a little salt; here we find none. However 'de gustibus (as Mrs. Glasse says), non est disputandum:' we therefore present our readers with a spoon (that is a page) full, that they may sip, and taste for themselves.

LETTER IX. page 24.

Violia to St. Julian.

" What adverse destiny, dear friend, has prevented our meeting? My servant is more than faithful, I trust therefore that my letters, ere this, have kissed your hand. If so, to what cause am I to impute your absence, and at such a critical moment too?—— Heavens !---if you should be false !---but it cannot be. Fly then to me, and tranquillize the agitated bosom of thy

VIOLIA."

POETRY.

ART. 22.---*Sonnets and other Poems; to which are added, Tales in Prose. By B. F.* 8vo. pp. 127. 4s. 6d. Blacks *and* Parry. 1805.

WE find by the dedication to her children, that B. F. is of the feminine gender; and by the conclusion of her preface we discover, that she has that respectful awe and fear of Reviewers, which befits all authors who come before our tribunal.

'To that respectable Synod (she must of course mean us,) whose fiat crowns the labours of the bard with immortality, or consigns them to oblivion,'---(very true, Madam; pray proceed)---' I dare not look up with higher hopes or expectation, than that this little volume, as *inoffensive*, may escape the severity of criticism; though the age of chivalry, we are told, is no more, the author appeals to their gallantry, (at this passage our pens leaped from our inkstands) not too rigidly to censure the light effusions of a female pen; and to their humanity, not to break a butterfly upon a wheel.' My good Madam, your appeal to our gallantry and humanity shall not be in vain. We have been misrepresented to you---indeed we have.

We break not butterflies upon a wheel,
Nor Pindar's heroes crack, unless their bite we feel.

In the gesticulating heat of composition, accidents of this kind will often happen, but we are not intentionally cruel. At Mr. Parkinson's Museum we have seen specimens of every species of butterfly stuck on white paper, and preserved in glass cases; in the same manner, Madam, shall a specimen of your poetry, which upon the whole, has considerable merit, be preserved on a fair page of our work, in the bookcases of the literati---FOR EVER.

'TO ATTICUS. (*With a Manuscript Volume of Juvenile Essays.*)

'Friend of my heart! whose smiles more pleasure yield
Than fame's loud praise, this simple gift approve;
O! be its wants of merit kindly veil'd
By the dear mantle of indulgent love.

'The lilies of the vale obscurely blow
In some lone dingle, or sequester'd glade;
And modest violets hide their purple glow
Beneath the moss-clad bank, and hazle shade.

'Yet Phœbus sheds his spirit-cheering ray,
On these retiring children of the dale;
And, at the tranquil hour of closing day,
Mild evening round them wraps her dewy veil.

'Then let the sunshine of thy favour gild
Thy Laura's heart with joy,--- her gift approve;
And, be its numerous blemishes conceal'd,
By the dear mantle of indulgent love. P. 31, 32.

You disguise your sentiments by fair speeches, Madam, but it is very evident that you have a terrible idea of us Reviewers. You fancy that our inner-chamber, like that of Blue Beard, is hung round with the mangled limbs of those whom we have slain, and yet with true female curiosity, you cannot resist the temptation of taking a peep. Well, Madam, after this visit, what do you think of us? Instead of what you expected to find, do you not think our room very much resembles one of those flower-gardens, which you tell us in your preface that you so much admire? Is not our large green table very like a lawn, on which quartos, octavos, and duodecimos, in yellow, brown, spotted, striped, pink, red, blue, dappled, orange, grey, purple, and variegated covers, present to the admiring eye all the vivid and intermingled colours of a gay parterre? This is the pleasing aspect, we assure you, in which it appears to us; and so powerful is the force of habit, that the unfolding leaves of a new book are in our eyes like expanding blossoms, and the smell of them is to our olfactory nerves sweet and fragrant as the scent of the woodbine or the rose. We regard ourselves as flower-gatherers from this book-sprinkled lawn, from which we are happy in collecting for our friends a monthly bouquet. Indeed one of our brethren, who is a botanist, so completely gives way to the pleasing delusion, that he calls pocket-books and almanacks, which usher in the year—primroses; Mr. Pye's odes he denominates---King-cups; sentimental novels---sensitive plants; trips to Margate---*dandelions;* sermons --poppies; new editions of Shakspeare---sweet Williams; Godwin's works---milkly thistles; satires---brambles; trials for crim. con.---cuckoo-pints; the life of Lord Nelson---laurel; Dr. Rowley on the cow-pock---ox-eye; &c. &c. &c. At this moment he is amusing himself with arranging our Index according to the system of Linnæus. Instead therefore of murderers and assassins, as we have been sometimes called, we rather resemble bees at their labour in collecting honey from various flowers.

Ac veluti in pratis, ubi apes æstate serenâ
Floribus insidunt variis, et candida circum
Lilia funduntur; strepit omnis murmure CLUB-ROOM.

ART 23.—*The Suicide Prostitute, a Poem.* 4*to.* Miller. 1805.

THE author of this juvenile performance will thank us for an act of tutorship in correcting a few of his errors. 'A child distempered

much,' is a vague expression. Had she been lately vaccinated? A note should have explained this.

'Since he, I love, distain'd my ermine fame,
Cropt the young flowret of my blooming name,
And sated, cast my sullied charms aside,
To pine unsweet, unlovely, unallied.'

As 'fame' is synonimous with 'name,' we must condemn that boldness, which changes what was a *cloak* in one line, to a *flowret* in the next. We shall say nothing of the most unsavoury epithet 'unsweet,' but we must observe that 'unallied' is a remarkable instance in which the sound is an echo of the sense; for this epithet is 'unallied' with any meaning in this place.

'And frequent too the hiss, with poison'd dart,
Has pierc'd and rankled in my wounded heart.'

What! did the hiss pierce and rankle? We are aware that poetry does sometimes give a body to 'airy nothings;' but our young author should be informed, that there are limits even to the creations of fancy. The machinery of a poem should present an uniform appearance; and if he introduces his 'hisses,' armed with 'poisoned darts,' his 'groans' should be provided with cannon, or small arms at least.

'Yes! my crimes shall cease, cease too all my pain'———

As the heroine is preparing to poison herself in the next line, we suppose that she was so *flustered* in this, that the earthly concerns of measure and quantity were forgotten.

'Soon as the drug shall reach my madden'd brain.
But, ah! my peace with God! Shall I find peace?
My soul sin-stain'd, and stung with dark disease!
Spare a deluded child, me, kind heaven, spare,
Who sunk the victim of a smiling snare;
Gilt was the crime with specious lustre o'er,
Fair virtue's stamp and decent garb it bore:
Ah! shone the prospect bright, alluring, gay,
'Twas sweetness all.'

Her soul *stained* and *stung* with something *dark!* a *smiling* snare! A *gilt* crime, *stamped* and *dressed* in a decent garb! The drug certainly operates with great effect.

'Full on my eye the lucid drop would swell,
While sorrow's lips their melting story *tell*.'

Her brain is maddened,

'So present tense and preterplu,
What has she to do with you.'

As a lunatic cannot be pronounced guilty according to law, we must allow the author to plead the insanity of his heroine, and *acquit* him of the following passages.

'Could swift-wing'd time recall his *fleeting* wain,'
'Begloom the sky.

'Scout me with haste, as some unseemly pest,
Wound with neglect, or stab me with a jest.'

'And tho' her soul shake with abhorence keen,
At joys unsweet.'

'The biting wind with cruel torrent pours,
Length'ning by cold and vehemence unkind
The long, long midnight of a sleepless mind.'

The unkind vehemence of a biting torrent! there is certainly no method in this madness.

At last she dies; nay, she tells us so herself, and consequently there can be no doubt of the fact.

'The struggle's o'er! my soul disburthen'd flies,
Quits its polluted clay, and seeks the skies.'

Perhaps the author thought that there might be many readers of the same incredulous temper as the man, who would not believe that Queen Elizabeth was dead, unless he should see it in her own hand-writing.

We advise the author, if he attempts another poem, not to take the trouble of putting his hero or heroine to a violent death, as they will most assuredly die in the natural way.

ART. 24. *Poems by R. L. Courtier. Vol. II.* 8vo. 7*s*. Rivingtons. 1805.

WE justices of Parnassus are very unwilling to exert our authority with the utmost rigour, but when a person is brought before us a second time, we must scrutinize his case thoroughly and pronounce our decision in a summary way to prevent further trouble. Mr. Courtier refers to many critical opinions given in his favor by our brethren on the bench, and by our predecessors. We have had recourse to the records, and certainly do find that his 'Pleasures of Solitude' were in general approved, but at the same time each of our brethren added some qualification of his praise. Justice M. R. said 'Mr. C. has convined us that he is an improving writer.' Justice B. C. 'We are willing to give encouragement to a poet, who labours to correct and improve his productions.' The opinion of the Critical Reviewers is recorded as follows. 'We are able to present a pleasing specimen of the author's minor muse." Mr. C. produces also some very flattering sentiments concerning the beauties of his poem, which were expressed by other gentlemen, who have taken out their 'DEDIMUS' to act in the same district; but as we seldom meet them on the bench, we shall decline publishing their decisions. We are of opinion that this second volume does not increase Mr. C.'s reputation as a poet; and we should rather suspect that these little poetical pieces were written before their author

published his 'Solitude,' but that the praises bestowed on that poem induced him to send his *first attempts* to the press; and we also are inclined to think that the epigram in the 147th page, which is not addressed to any person in particular, may be reserved as a rod in pickle for us, in case our decree on the merits of this second volume should not be favorable.

Epigram.

'Alas! unjustly now you blame
My verses, who inspired the flame:
Thus if of rhymes a graceless spinner
I grow, 'tis you that are the *sinner*.'

If we have sinned once, we must be careful not to sin a second time. Mr. C.'s Epigrams are like harlequin's horse; the horse was good in colour, shape, and height, but it was dead; so our author's Epigrams have the proper number of feet, and they rhyme tolerably well, but they also are lifeless. Dr. Johnson praises the man as the fairest of critics, who, when he censured a poetical translation of the Georgics, produced a translation of his own. It may be a hazardous attempt, but if the prize were a boiled egg, we would place the following epigrams in competition with those by Mr. C.

Epigram on Friendship by Mr. C.

To ———

'Well! triumph in the pains you take
Of friends your enemies to make:
I rather must his zeal commend,
Who makes an enemy a friend.'

Extempore Epigram on Economy by a Brother Critic.

Well! triumph in the pains you take
To purchase butter'd bun and cake;
I rather must his thrift commend,
Who manages no pence to spend.

Epigram by Mr. C.

ON SEEING A PLACE CALLED THE 'RETREAT.'

'Ye smoke-loving cits, call ye this a retreat?
This prim new brick-house at the back of the street!'

Palinodia.

An Epigram by a Brother Critic.

'O! Mister Courtier,
What call you this here!
Most certain I am,
That it's no epigram.'

The following is above our powers: we shall not attempt to rival it, but shall content ourselves with the humble office of commentators.

Re-action by Mr. C.

'Prove, prove, Horatio, quaintly cries,
The system of re-action!
This stupid book, with labouring eyes,
I read—to stupefaction!!

Last line 'I;' *nostro periculo lege*, 'WE.'

Elegiac Stanza by Mr. C.

'Yet I fear not foliage dying,
Winter desolate and dread;
Since his blast will find me lying
Safe beneath the turf I tread!'

Stanza on a Bottle of Port by a Brother Critic.

'Underneath the bran I'm lying;
Winter's frown or summer's grin
Cannot spoil me, while I'm dry in
Bottom-corner of a bin.'

Another specimen of the contents of Mr. C.'s second volume;

Apology.

'Do I rove? Where all is motion,
Why may not a lover range?
Earth is restless, restless ocean,
Why must only man not change?
Dull I grow, and cannot see
First as I beheld thee;
Else to love thou can'st not be
Her, who once compelled thee.'

By this apology, which we suppose is addressed to his muse, Mr. C. seems determined not to be quiet; but before he publishes a third volume, we advise him to recollect that 'three movings are as bad as a *fire*,' which a burnt child ought to dread.

Mr. C. does not inform us whether the following is supposed to be written by a butcher.

The Request.

'Return me what the other day
By fraud or force you took away;
Give that, with which I cannot part,
Come, no demur! give back my *heart!*
'Twas *cruel*—for this tranquil breast
That moment you bereaved of rest;
Dishonest, for you might have left,
Another to repair your theft.'

There cannot be any doubt that the lady, who is addressed in the following stanza, was bethrothed to a carpenter;

To ——

'Oh! if preferred the old man's kiss,
Useless for me is all your raving,
So, get thee married, pretty Miss!
And suit his fancies to a *shaving*.

It is our duty, however, to say that the ODE ON THE PAST (p. 61.) is a respectable poem. The elegy composed on the Tomb of Dermody also deserves to be read in court as an affidavit in Mr. C.'s favor.

ART. 25. *Original Poems for Infant Minds, by several young Persons. Vol. 2d.* 12*mo.* Darton *and* Harvey. 1805.

Very good in their way.

ART. 26. *Modern Paris: a free Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal.* 12*mo. London.* Hatchard. 1805.

THIS is one of the worst things we ever had the misfortune to meet with. A free imitation of any satire of Juvenal should at least possess good sense, a dignified manner, and a flow of poetry; not to mention a spirited reprobation of the vices of the age; but without any single one of these qualifications, to apply that satire to Paris which Johnson has applied to London, required the consummate impudence of the present author. That his folly equals his impudence, and that his doggrel exceeds both, let the following amply testify.

'Here Buonaparte's lust, in Barras' lot
Cold to his friend, to his friend's mistress hot,
Him banish'd from her lawless bed for life,
Of his own lawful bed to make her wife,' &c. page 36.

The allusion to *Barras* was suggested by 'Stoicus occidit *Baream*,' &c. And this is Juvenal! This is below the bellman.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ART. 27---*A List of the irregular Præterites or Præterperfects, of the Supines, and also of the past Participles of deponent Verbs, shewing from what Verbs they are derived. By Edmond Philip Bridel, LL.D.* 12*mo. London.* Symonds. 1805.

THE above gentleman, author of an Introduction to English Grammar, and master of the academy, Bird's buildings, Islington, declares that it is his intention, in the course of the present philological work of eighteen duodecimo pages, to remove one of the principal difficulties which impede the progress of Latin learners, and to spare their teachers the trouble of answering their questions concerning the derivation of verbs. He adds his farther hope, that men of judgment 'will allow, that amongst the merits of this book, if entitled to any, its shortness is not the least.' We think it the very greatest. 'Breve sit quod turpiter audes,' if applied in a literary, instead of a moral sense, would have been the best motto for this writer, for we cannot sanction that which he aspires to: *In tenui labor, at tenuis non gloria.* Little things may be very ill done. Supines are grammatical existencies, whose nature has never been

well defined. Many of those indeed quoted by schoolmasters, are non-entities.

Dr. Edmund Philip Bridel has introduced the young Latinists to some very odd Supines. 'Linctum' and 'stinctum,' for instance, and 'pigitum' and 'peditum,' and 'omne quod exit in um.'

He gives us also some very superfluous directions 'how to use his book.' Common sense would have pointed out it's most natural application. We are at a loss to discover in what respect it is not entirely superseded by previous vocabularies, and dictionaries without number. The stomach of the philologist is overloaded with old messes of verbal criticism hashed and served up again and again;

Occidit miseros crambe repetita magistros.

ART. 28.—*Observations on the Formation and Management of useful and ornamental Plantations; on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening; and on gaining and embanking Land from Rivers or the Sea. Illustrated with ten Plates. By J. Loudon, Designer, &c. pp.* 342. 8*vo.* 10*s.* 6*d.* Longman. 1804.

THE art of landscape gardening, or more properly speaking, of picturesque agriculture, is almost peculiar to England, and will most probably remain so for some time, as our continental neighbours who attempted to imitate it, have failed so completely, that they began to question whether it were really beautiful; a controversy, hitherto undecided, commenced on the relative merits of leaden fountains, spouts of water, preposterous figures of imaginary monsters, gravelled walks, square hedge-rows, and lofty trees, compared with the open variegated lawn, the winding rivulet, the cascade, the overshadowed lake, the moss-grown rocks, and all the indefinite variety of natural beauties, that most of our English landscapes present to the view. Mr. L.'s work has a higher claim to approbation than that of merely shewing how to collect all the pleasing objects in rural scenery to decorate the environs of our mansions; it unites considerations not only of individual, but of great national utility. Led by the harmony of the analogies of nature, perceptible only to a cultivated taste, the author unknowingly demonstrates the fact, that, as in the moral world there is no real beauty without virtue, so in the physical there is none without utility. The idea of making our pleasure grounds and ornamental plantations more beautiful by converting them into nurseries of timber, which may eventually serve for the protection of our liberties, and the transportation of our manufactures, is a happy exemplification of the grand and beautiful; and we have patriotism enough to hope, that our author's 'Observations on useful and ornamental Gardening' will meet with that general attention to which their intrinsic merit entitles them. Pleased, however, as we are with Mr. L.'s general views, we must object to some of his less important details. In Plate II. of the 'Outlines of Plantations,' the first line of the beautiful, besides

being deficient in variety, scarcely possesses grace, still less beauty; and the picturesque is too fanciful, too zigzag, and too pointed to be natural. In Plate VII. of the 'Outlines of Ground,' the beautiful and picturesque are more happily illustrated. We would observe too, that there is really no landscape in its natural state, truly ugly or deformed, however deficient it may be in picturesque effect; but it may become so by the levelling hand of art, and by the introduction of foreign, fantastical, or unnatural objects. After the example of Gerardin, Mr. L. makes picturesque beauty, the 'beauty of the graces;' but grace is in reality, much less essential to the picturesque than to the simply beautiful. Something of ruggedness, as antique fragments, resembling vestiges of ruined works of art, are admitted to be necessary to constitute the picturesque; but ruggedness and grace have no affinity. We do, indeed, speak of the graceful majesty of a tall tree or a lofty mountain; but it is always when they present the circular outline of beauty, and not the characteristics of the picturesque. By adopting too implicitly, the sentiments of Messrs. Price and Knight, the author evidently confounds grace with beauty, when he intimates in p. 222, and 226, 'that beauty requires to be accompanied with the picturesque, to preserve it from dullness and insipidity.' That variety which is one of the essential constituents of beauty, can never fail to be animating and attractive; whereas grace alone may be insipid from its sameness. Every beautiful object must be graceful; but every graceful one is not beautiful; thus, the Venus de Medicis, and the Belvidere Apollo are in their attitude and contour highly graceful, but they are too deficient in variety of expression, and in short, too perfectly statues to be beautiful. We also find, in some of the outlines, the graceful substituted for the beautiful, doubtless from deference to the maxims of Mr. Price, or, perhaps, of Mr. Knight, who, in his eager desire of novelty, has produced a specimen of taste, rather whimsical than elegant or correct. We mean not however, to censure the laudable efforts of this gentleman, after the manner of most writers on landscape gardening, or picturesque agriculture, who, like those on farriery, generally think it necessary to overturn the systems of their predecessors in order to establish their own; and we would earnestly recommend it to our author to give a proof of his superior taste by retrenching in his second edition, all the epithets bestowed on the system of *capability* Browne, particularly while it is honoured by so very reputable a follower as Mr. Repton. Our limits oblige us to omit the author's invention of invisible fences, and also his plans for 'embanking land from the sea;' not that we think them unimportant or impracticable, but because we should rather previously see our mountains covered with woods, (as Mr. L. suggests,) to serve as materials for the 'wooden walls' that constitute the glory and defence of England.

On the whole, considering the arduousness of the hitherto imperfectly defined subject of taste, we cannot hesitate to say, that the work of Mr. Loudon contains, perhaps, fewer errors, and will be found a more useful, concise, and practical treatise on the art

of decorating and planting rural scenery, than any other that we have seen of equal extent. The author, and all readers of taste will find many interesting observations on this subject, in the excellent works of Mr. Dayes on Painting.

ART. 29.—*Description of Models to explain Crystallography, or an easy Introduction to the Understanding of the Formation of Crystals, so essential to the Knowledge of all Substances, chemical or mineralogical. By James Sowerby, F.L.S. &c. Part I.* 1*s. with the Models.* 10*s.* 6*d.* White. 1805.

THE modern science of crystallography is so fascinating, when properly understood, it holds up such a quarry to the busy mind, and might be rendered so illustrative of mathematical demonstration, that we may expect to see it spiritualized with the wonders of the telescope and the microscope, to which it is in no respect inferior. The author now presents us only with the first part, and he proposes to extend the work to eight or ten, we could wish to more, that he might comprise a complete system of crystallography; a desideratum not hitherto even attempted. The simplicity, perspicuity, and conciseness of Mr. Sowerby's explanations, and the mathematical accuracy of his models, render the whole infinitely superior to any thing of the kind that we have seen in Paris by Jolyclerc, Patrin, Brogniart, or Haüy; and must insure him the acknowledgments of all amateur-philosophers, chemists, and even mineralogists. This first part contains the crystallography of Newcastle coals, the crystallization of which is a discovery of our author; a discovery, we doubt not, that will lead to some very important practical purposes in regard to the value and quality of this most essential article. The second part, we learn, is to display the beautiful crystals of sulphur, and the third, those of the diamond, which will conclude the crystallography of combustible substances.

ART. 30. *The Roman History, from the Foundation of Rome, to the Subversion of the Eastern Empire and the taking of Constantinople by the Turks; including the Antiquities, Manners, and Customs, as well as the Jurisprudence and Military Establishment of the Romans. In Seven books. On a new and interesting Plan. By the Rev. John Adams.* 8vo. 4*s.* 6*d. bound.* Law. 1805.

A JUDICIOUS Epitome, arranged in a method at once perspicuous and pleasing. The three last books are entirely new, as an abridgment; for neither the history of the eastern empire, connected with the revolutions of modern Europe, nor the manners and customs of the Romans, are to be found in any work of the same size.

ERRATA in our last Number.

P. 133, l. 33, *for* virtue *read* intire.
211, l. 24, *for* letters *read* latter.